

Maryland Commission on Caregiving

January 04, 2024

10:30 AM -12:00 PM

Virtual Meeting Minutes

Commission Member Present: Ann Squire, Chalarra Sessoms, Jennifer Eastman, Kathy Wehr, Terri Johnson, Kate Farinholt, Mary Anne Kane Breschi, Theresa Robertson, Shalini Arora, Yetunde Olobatuyi, Trina Townsend, Anastasia Edmontson, Esther Ward

Guests: Greg Seseke, Morgan Mills, Dorinda Adams, Estelle Brooks, Valerie Borek, Jenn Crosbie, Michael Gray, Mike Adams, Rose Holandis

Welcome & Introduction: Theresa Robertson, Commission Chair

Review and approval of November's minutes: Yetunde reported that November's minute is ready but was not sent out due to our in person luncheon in December. November and January's minutes will be sent out together when it is ready.

Motion to approve November's meeting Minutes: No, not ready

Updates on the 2023 Caregiver's Survey (Jennifer):

During the meeting, Jennifer gave a brief overview of the caregiver's survey and the reason for conducting the survey. She announced that the survey has been progressing well, with approximately 93,000 people receiving it and nearly 3,500 responses received. However, an issue arose earlier when an unauthorized individual hacked into the survey and promised Amazon gift cards to participants. As a result, Jennifer has received emails from individuals inquiring about the gift cards. The sub-committee will meet next Thursday to review the results, check for duplicates, and decide whether to keep the link open. The original deadline for the survey was December 31, 2023, but the link remains open, and new guests were encouraged to share it with their contacts. Once the link is closed, the analyzer will begin analyzing the data, with more information to follow next month.

Additionally, Mary Anne suggested creating a caregiver's survey for individuals caring for children aged 18 and younger, and volunteered to be part of the development process. Shalini and Kathy also offered their assistance.

Commission member's Goals for 2024 (Theresa and Kate):

Commission members discussed their goals for 2024, focusing on increasing funding and engaging policy makers. The Commission chair quickly went over the Commission's Legislative mandates which can be found on the commission website.

<https://dhs.maryland.gov/maryland-commission-caregiving/> Non-state employees, Terri, Theresa, and Kathy, volunteered to speak to policy makers and legislatures on behalf of the commission. The commission chair and co-chair aim to engage with state secretaries to secure more funding and highlight the commission's accomplishments. Members were encouraged to work with their connections to invite presenters to share caregiver resources at future meetings. Trina stated she has an upcoming meeting next week with MDDOA Director of Special Initiative and would ask if she can come and present at the next commission meeting in February. If anyone has anyone in mind, they are advised to contact our chair or co-chair Theresa or Kate.

Members expressed interest in learning about other programs in Maryland that provide respite services to caregivers. They suggested inviting representatives from these organizations to share information about available resources. Kathy noted that each jurisdiction and state program would need to be contacted to identify respite resources. Jennifer highlighted that the federal government has already outlined over 150 actions that states and local governments can take to support family caregivers, as detailed in the National Strategy for Family Caregivers. More information about this can be found at https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/raise_srg/natlstrategyfamcaregivers_actionsco.pdf

National Family Caregivers Month/November/Website:

Theresa reported that the website that was created in celebration of NFCM in November is still live and that new resources have been added. She encouraged everyone to visit the website and to contact her should they have any caregivers resources they would like to include. The website is www.caring4mdcaregivers.com

Announcements:

Dorinda reminded the commission that the legislative session begins next week and expressed hope that the commission would consider the tax credit bill sponsored by Delegate Harrison and Senator Benson.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 1, 2024 from 10:30am-12 pm.

