

Maryland Commission on Caregiving

March 6, 2025

10:30 AM -12:00 PM

Virtual Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes

- Commission Member Present: Shalini Arora, Larry Bram, Mary Anne Kane Breshi, Theresa Robertson, Molly Wisniewski
- Guests: Dorinda Adams, Doug Banks, Estelle Brooks, Teresa Jetter-Cutting, Pearl Harmon, Terri Johnson, Melissa Karcher, Leslie Smith-Ray, AnnMarie Riehl, Hilary Wiseman, Brenda Williams
- Approval of February's Meeting Minutes
 - Motion to approve February's meeting Minutes: Yes

Survey Results Review and Expansion Discussion

- **Survey Results Summary:**
 - 2,129 caregivers responded to the Caregiver Survey
 - Top priorities identified:
 - Statewide Resource List
 - New Service Guide
- **Discussion:**
 - Leslie highlighted that these priorities suggest a strong desire for a "one-stop shop" for caregivers. She suggested the Commission align efforts with existing initiatives such as the Ambassador Training Program.
 - Mary Anne Kane Breshi acknowledged the complexity of creating a "one-stop shop" but noted that programs like No Wrong Door and the Ambassador Training Program are strong starting points.
 - Additional strategies discussed include ongoing collaboration efforts among MDOA, DHS, MDH, and DOD to address caregiver issues and broader concerns.
- **Next Steps:**
 - A slide deck summarizing the survey findings will be sent out to Commission members along with the March Meeting Minutes
- **Survey Expansion Discussion:**
 - Commission members Shalini, Leslie, and Molly met with Dr. Joan Davitt and her team of graduate students to discuss expanding the caregiver survey to include caregivers of individuals 18 years old and under.
 - UMD, which conducted the original survey, expressed confidence in successfully expanding the survey.

- MDOA is exploring options to conduct the survey in Spanish.
- The expanded survey will include regional focus groups to gather additional insights.
- UMD will submit a work plan to MDOA; once approved, an Interagency Agreement will be established to support implementation.
- Dorinda mentioned a similar survey conducted in 2014/2015, which was available in Spanish and could provide valuable insights for the new process.
- **Acknowledgments:**
 - Shalini commended the Commission's dedication in ensuring the successful launch of the previous survey and expressed her enthusiasm for supporting these expanded efforts.

The establishment of (3) MCC Subcommittees

- **The (3) Subcommittees are:**
 1. **Adult Caregiver Survey Review Committee**
 - *This subcommittee will review and assess the existing Caregiver Survey for individuals providing care to those aged 18 and older. The committee will recommend program developments, ensure data relevance, and strategize outreach efforts to ensure data from the survey is dispersed.*
 2. **Youth Caregiver Survey Expansion Committee**
 - *This subcommittee will focus on developing and expanding the Caregiver Survey to address the unique needs of caregivers providing care to individuals aged 18 and younger. The committee will identify key focus areas, design survey questions, and strategize outreach efforts to provide to UMD School of Social Work.*
 3. **Legislative Advocacy and Policy Committee**
 - *This subcommittee will monitor, review, and advocate for legislative initiatives that impact caregivers across all age groups. The committee will track policy developments, provide recommendations to the MCC, and engage stakeholders to promote caregiver support initiatives.*
- **Subcommittee Commitments:**
 - Each subcommittee will have 3-5 members and 1 Chair
 - Subcommittee members will meet once a month for at least (6) months with the time and date to be determined by the members.
- **Current Subcommittee Volunteers:**
 - Adult Caregiver Survey Review Committee:
 1. Pearl Harmon
 2. Molly Wisniewski
 - Caregiver Survey Expansion for Caregivers to Individuals 18 and Under Committee
 1. Larry Bram

2. Mary Kane-Breschi
 3. Kathy Wehr
 4. Molly Wisniewski
- Legislative Committee
 1. Dorinda Adams
 2. Leslie Smith-Ray
 3. Theresea Robinson
- If Commission members are interested in joining one of these committees, please contact Molly Wisniewski at molly.wisniewski@maryland.gov.

ACL Grant Update: Caregiver Assessment

- As part of the ACL Grant, MDOA is working to incorporate a Caregiver Assessment into the MAP program to better identify caregiver needs when they call for assistance. The selected tool for this assessment is the Johns Hopkins Memory Care Family Checklist Tool.
- On May 1st, we invited Mark Tesoro and Dr. Quincy Samsus to present the Tool to the Commission to gauge feedback.
- Key Points on the Caregiver Assessment are:
 - The tool includes a dementia-specific component to address unique caregiving needs.
 - The tool is used in other states to assess caregivers' needs.
 - It is self-guided and generates a list of resources tailored to the caregiver's responses (e.g., transportation support).
- Discussion Highlights:
 - Mary Anne suggested the marketing team should explore ways to make information readily available for those caring for an aging adult. Suggested adding a clear call-to-action like: "Call this number if you are seeking help."
 - Hilary Recommended encouraging caregivers who call to identify if the person in their care is a veteran and whether they are enrolled in services. Noted the importance of active workgroups focused on developing resources and refining questions to better support veterans.

Legislative Update

- As a reminder, last year's session passed SB 202, which remains an unfunded bill. SB 104 seeks to reintroduce the tax credit, but given Maryland's economic deficit, and the fact that this bill carries a Fiscal Note, its passage may be challenging.
- The 2022 Family Paid Leave Act established an insurance fund for Marylanders to provide paid leave benefits.
 - A study conducted on this program revealed concerns about the state's ability to fund it. As a result, there has been a pause in its implementation.
 - A bill is currently under consideration to uphold the pause and outsource the paid leave program since the state cannot afford to fund it directly.
- AARP Maryland Advocacy

- Dorinda noted that AARP Maryland is actively advocating for funding in FY26 to support the Family Caregiver Grant Expense Program.
- While stepping back from some advocacy efforts, AARP remains committed to ensuring that existing programs continue to receive support.
- AARP is also advocating for SB 357, a pharmacy bill aimed at capping prescription costs.
- Department of Human Services
 - DHS's Office of Legislative Affairs can offer presentations on relevant topics to support these efforts.

Upcoming Presentations:

- April 3rd: Hilary Wiseman, Program of General Caregiver Support Services Coordinator with VA Maryland Healthcare System to present on VA Caregiver Support Services
- May 1st: Mark Tesoro, Cognitive and Behavioral Health Specialist at the Maryland Department of Aging, and Dr. Quincy Samus, Director of the Memory and Aging Services Innovation Center at Johns Hopkins, will present the Johns Hopkins Memory Care Family Checklist Tool.

Questions/Concerns/Suggestions/Announcements

- Questions: The Commission members participated early on in the LRM development plan, which informed the work of LRM - what has come of these efforts?
 - MDOA is in the process of public comment on the 4 epic goals including promoting economics for Caregiving.
 - MDOA will send the link to the public comment forum with the meeting minutes.
 - Townhalls will be held in:
 - Salisbury
 - Garrett
 - Baltimore City
 - (2) Virtual
 - Information on the Townhalls will be sent with the meeting minutes.
- Governor's ENOUGH Initiative
 - Mary Anne noted that there may be opportunities for MCC to align with the Governor's ENOUGH Initiative created to address childhood poverty.

Meeting Adjourned