

Consumers for Quality Care, No Matter Where Initiative

National Advisory Council Meeting

June 2, 2011

Meeting Notes

Present on call:

Eric Carlson, National Senior Citizens Law Center

Deb Merrill, National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities

Linda Muckway, consumer

Mary Osborne, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Cecili Thompson Williams, National Partnership for Women and Families, Campaign for Better Care

Daniel Wilson, National Caucus and Center on Black Aged

Robyn welcomed Daniel Wilson to the council.

- **Update: Status of work in pilot states**

- Provided update on status of work

- 1. Learning & Planning Days :**

A Learning & Planning Day is an onsite workday with advisory committees and their guests. The purpose is to teach the group how to systematically conduct a policy campaign and develop a beginning action plan to work on a policy issue selected by the group. We are starting with a short-term (3-4 months) goal in each state to give the group experience with working with each other.

We have conducted Learning & Planning Days in Ohio and New Mexico.

Ohio: The group chose to start by increasing consumer awareness of the home care aspect of the ombudsman program. This part of the ombudsman program is not very well known, and the

ombudsmen play an important role in achieving quality care and services.

New Mexico: The group decided to advocate for a memorial (resolution) that calls for a study of the home care ombudsman program. The goal is to find a legislator by January 2012 who will agree to introduce this piece of legislation.

Both groups felt that the ombudsman program would ensure that all home care consumers regardless of payment source are served. About 13 states have mandates to cover home care but in some cases there is no funding.

2. Home Care & Services Survey

A survey to gather information from consumers about their home care experiences and what they believe is quality care was developed and disseminated in each state. Advisory council members in each state disseminated the survey through their networks. The survey is available online and in hard copy.

Received around 35 completed surveys in both Ohio and New Mexico and both states are pushing to get more.

The survey not only provides consumer feedback, it has turned out to be a great recruiting tool because many people sign up for Consumer Voice emails.

- **Discussion about distribution of survey at the national level**

National Advisory Council members were asked if they would help disseminate the survey to consumers through their networks. Members were very willing to do what they could and the council discussed different possibilities. Robyn will follow up with members individually.

- **Discussion about Consumer Perspectives on Quality project**

- Conducting interviews: The council discussed where to find volunteers to conduct interviews by phone and volunteer training. Deb noted that care managers in area agencies on aging may be able to ask questions when

they do their client reviews. Daniel indicated that their grantees must do a certain number of community service hours and might be a possibility. Cecili has done a lot of volunteer training and would be willing to help in that area.

- Criteria for selecting consumers to interview: Council members were asked if we should include a wide range of consumers receiving home care services (for instance, people receiving Medicaid waiver services, Medicare skilled home health care, services funded by the Older American Act, services paid for privately, etc.) or just focus on one category of consumer.

The consensus was that our focus should be broad so that we will be able to make more comparisons. It was noted that one of the challenges will be how to reach these people. We will probably need to work with providers perhaps, such as home health agencies, etc. Deb added that AAAs sometimes make referrals in some rural communities and might be able to put us in touch with agencies willing to work with us.

- How to determine number of interviews to conduct: We may need to consult with researchers to figure out sample size. A member of an advisory council in one of the pilot states suggested that we might use a percentage based on the size of the state rather than a flat number.
- Interview questions: Consumer Voice staff asked members where to find research about how to ask questions to older adults and persons with disabilities and how to ask about quality. Cecili has done a lot of this type of research and works with Lake Partners (a polling firm). She said it might be worth trying to contact them. Daniel stated that AoA has done some work in this area and stressed that there needs to be cultural sensitivity and competency when conducting these interviews.

- Finding consumers to interview

Members talked about how each advisory committee member might help to locate consumers in the 5 states. Robyn urged everyone to think about ways, through their networks, to identify people receiving services who are willing to be interviewed. It was suggested that a question be added to the national Home Care & Services survey asking if people would be willing to have us contact them about their home care experience.

- Next meeting: August 4, 2011