

**NY Connects State Long Term Care Advisory Council Meeting  
Upstate Meeting Minutes  
March 11, 2008**

**I. Welcome and Introductions – Michael Burgess- Director, NYS Office for the Aging**

- Welcomed the NY Connects State Long Term Care Advisory Council (LTCAC) members to the first upstate meeting and informed them that a downstate Council was also formed and will be meeting for the first time on April 8, 2008.
- The formation of the LTCAC is the first step towards improving the long term care system and emphasized the concept of ‘aging in place’.
- The NYSOFA budget tentatively includes more funding for Caregivers Services, NY Connects, and Livable Communities.
- The LTCAC will focus on LTC for all people who need long term care as well as caregivers, providers, and community organizations.
- Subcommittees – A MISCC subcommittee has been developed to focus on issues related to the Olmstead Decision and the individuals’ right to live in the community. The MISCC subcommittee will be responsible for reporting to the statewide Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC).
- The LTCAC will serve as a conduit for long term care reform. Members will be responsible for serving as liaisons between the government and the community. The LTCAC will meet 3 times a year.

**II. Presentation and Discussion of Long Term Care Reform and NY Connects: Choices for Long Term Care - Lynne Couey – Director, LTC Restructuring Project; Laurie Pferr – Executive Deputy Director, NYS Office for the Aging; Gail Koser – Assistant Director, Division of Policy, Management and Public Information, NYS Office for the Aging**

*DOH Long Term Care Restructuring Update (Lynn Couey)*

- NY Connects is part of a larger statewide effort to rebalance long term care efforts and resources.
- PowerPoint Presentation distributed to Advisory Council members via email.

### *History of NY Connects and Its Role in Long Term Care (Laurie Pferr)*

- Overview of the history and background of NY Connects.
- Discussion of the Olmstead decision and its current impact on services, specifically the Most Integrated Settings Committee (MISCC) and NY Connects.
- NY Connects follows the national direction to simplify access to services and provide comprehensive information regarding long term care choices.

### *NY Connects Current Status (Gail Koser)*

- Presentation on data collected during county NY Connects I & A calls.
- As of the meeting date, 91% of NY Connects counties have local Long term Care Councils, 82% are providing Information and Assistance and 81% have developed a public education/outreach program.
- Discussed future developments of NY Connects counties including increasing public education efforts, strengthening local collaborations with agencies and systems, developing comprehensive resource directories and continuing to develop means to streamline access to information and services.

### ***Members' Comments***

- Affordable, accessible housing remains a significant barrier to long term care supports in communities across the state.
- Barriers to independence of choice and service provision continue for adults with disabilities.
- NY Connects needs to place greater emphasis on people with disabilities as well as older New Yorkers.
- It is important that caregivers performing non-medical services are afforded greater respect and support for the valuable role they play in helping family members and others remain in their homes and communities.

### **III. Break for Lunch**

- Joe Baker from the Governor's Office was the luncheon speaker and recognized the importance of NY Connects as an essential component in long term care reform.

#### IV. Experiences in Long Term Care

##### *Sarah Ingerson*

- Spoke about her mother's impressions of long term care services when Sarah was a child. Her mother told her that finding information and accessing services for a child with mobility impairment was difficult and confusing.
- Discussed attending Buffalo State University where she was forced to leave due to the lack of wheelchair accessibility in being able to get to class in the winter.
- Stated that it was difficult to find affordable, accessible housing where she could live independently.
- Stated that many young adults are unable to start or complete their education because of a lack of attendant care providers and the differences in availability can be drastic among various communities and counties.

##### *Gerry Bojczuk*

- Discussed the difficulty in obtaining the needed services and supports for his visional impairment in order to access the right kind of training for a new career.
- Suggested that business principles of quality control through data collection and statistical analysis should be applied to case management and other services resulting in benefits to consumers and system accountability.
- Stated that it can feel as though service coordinators and case managers are the guardians and gatekeepers rather than focused on providing information, linkage and access to supports.

##### *Priscilla Bassett*

- She is caring for an older adult who has no relatives or close friends.
- Identified gaps in the system.
- Priscilla reported concern with the lack of daily living care services afforded to the person she was caring for, but as a self chosen caregiver, she is unable to do provide anymore than she is already doing.

##### *Lisa Alford*

- Described caregiving for her son who has special needs after he was discharged from the NICU.
- Suggested that more emphasis be placed on training professionals to provide services in as bias-free a manner as possible so that parents do not have to justify their family lifestyles to have the service needs of their child met.
- Stressed that barriers to service delivery may also be internal when, for example, the regulations of one agency collide with another in a daycare or other facility.

## **V. Presentation and Discussion of Local Long Term Councils**

### *Thea Griffin (NY Connects Bureau Director)*

- The purpose and role of the Local Long Term Care Councils in long term care reform efforts were discussed.
- Discussed the diverse makeup of local LTCCs including consumers, caregivers, providers, stakeholders and local government representatives.
- LTCCs identify the long term care system gaps and barriers and develop strategies and priorities to implement change.
- Surveys, consultants and focus groups have been developed as ways to address the barriers and gaps in service. Some counties have completed preliminary reports and white papers regarding these issues.

### *Commissioner David Jolly (DSS Commissioner, Orange County)*

- Orange County's LTCC has 15 members that meet monthly.
- Council led by local providers rather than local government representatives.
- LTCC also has sub-committees with open membership which are focused on specific areas of reform and implementation of the NY Connects program.
- Concentrated on reducing or eliminating barriers to service.

### *Erin Stachewicz (LTC Coordinator, Albany County NY Connects)*

- Albany County's LTCC has over 30 members.
- Commissioners of Social Service and Aging chair LTCC meetings.
- Used the LTCC to identify gaps to serve as a blueprint for rebalancing local long term care.
- Identified 8 goals such as housing, home care, case coordination and crisis management.
- The first year the LTCC focused on aging concerns and the second year's focus will be on disability issues. The intent is to have a 5 year plan and various sub-committees to address issues.

## **VI. MISCC Stakeholder Group**

John Eadie gave a brief report on the Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC). The January meeting minutes are in the Advisory Council binders and several Advisory Council members are also serving on the MISCC.

- Discussed promoting a fundamental policy change in preparing people who take care of their families and allocating the necessary resources to them should be the top priority.

- The terms, informal care and non-medical care minimize the significance and magnitude of care that caregivers provide and should be changed.

**VII. Public Education and Local Outreach – Making the Community Aware of NY Connects – Greg Olsen, Deputy Director, Division of Policy Management and Public Information**

Greg gave a brief presentation on public education and local community outreach. He discussed NY Connects standards which address that public materials be culturally and linguistically sensitive. A short visual presentation of NY Connects brochures, ads, and a television commercial followed, all prepared by local counties.

**VIII. Feedback and Next Steps – Michael Burgess**

*Next meetings: June 11<sup>th</sup> and October 29<sup>th</sup>*

Suggestions for the next agenda:

- More time devoted to discussion of systems change and reducing or eliminating barriers in the system.
- Provide information on the status of consumer directed Expanded In-Home Services Elderly Program.
- Continue to include the consumer/caregiver experiences as a regular part of the agenda
- Provide a legislative update on long term care issues.
- Discussion of OMRRD and aging intersection to share issues and solutions.
- Promote public awareness and outreach to diverse and special populations.
- Increase engagement of consumers in policy and program design, and implementation.