



MILWAUKEE COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
& HUMAN SERVICES

## AGING & DISABILITIES SERVICES

### SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE MEETING JULY 31, 2024

A quorum of **Service Delivery Committee** members convened virtually on Wednesday, July 31, 2024. Members and attendees joined the virtual meeting with video conference and or conference call options (computer or telephone).

#### **Members Present:**

Commissioner Amber Miller, *Chair*  
Commissioner George Banda  
Commissioner Mark Behar  
Commissioner Janice Wilberg

#### **Members Excused:**

David LaCroix  
Patrick Lee  
Commissioner Terrence R. Moore Sr.

#### **Milwaukee County Staff:**

Andrew Bethke  
Claire Enders  
Daniel Idzikowski, *DHHS*  
Jill Knight, *DHHS*  
Kaisa Kerrigan, *DHHS*  
Carrie Koss Vallejo, *DHHS*  
Lottie Maxwell-Mitchell  
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*  
Migdalia Pacheco, *DHHS*  
Emily Petersen, *DHHS*  
Gaylyn Reske, *DHHS*

#### **Milwaukee County Staff Continued...**

Kayla Steinke, *DHHS*  
Nina Yang, *DHHS*

#### **Attendees from the Public**

Cindy Anderson, *Employee Milwaukee*  
Darryl Anderson, *ERAS*  
Ana Castaneda, *United Community Center*  
Kiara Clayton, *Employee Milwaukee*  
Shannon Downie, *SOA*  
Michelle Drouillard, *Goodwill SE WI*  
Truth Freemyn, *Riverworks*  
Matthew Hayes, *Legal Action*  
Miriam Kaja, *SOA*  
Marni King, *Commissioner*  
Anthony Myers, *Riverworks*  
Liz Popowski, *JFS*  
Janmila shing-Hon  
Cathy Wood, *SOA*  
Zongsae Vang, *Hmong American Friendship Association,*  
Kimberly Zimdars, *Vital Voices*

## MINUTES

### I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Amber Miller called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. and took roll. Carrie Koss Vallejo, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Aging and Disabilities Services, Aging Unit Program, and Planning Coordinator informed members and attendees of the intent of the Service Delivery Committee (SDC).

## II. PRESENTATIONS FROM VENDORS

Vendors are providing a report out for January – June 2024.

- **Presenter:** United Community Center (UCC), Ana Castaneda  
**Contract:** Senior Center and Nutrition Programming

Three highlights from UCC's report were that they encountered challenges with the cost of meals. Funding received for meals has stayed the same hasn't for a couple of years, and the cost of food has risen. On the positive side, UCC has added new activities for seniors to stay engaged, demonstrating its commitment to older adults' well-being and optimism about the organization's future.

The Committee had a few questions. One was a clarification question about the 170 active seniors reported in the center. **Does it reflect active members or active participants in the programs?** The answer was both, as the 170 participants are at least active in one activity and participate in a program. The goal for increasing the number of participants needed to be more wasn't evident. **Does UCC have the capacity to increase the number of participants from 170 to 200 in the next six months?** Yes, at least 200 participants. UCC has been actively researching how to increase its number of participants.

**A question about Performance Objective 1: Currently, the actual number shows UCC didn't meet its goal and is at high nutrition risk. Why?** The slide reflects an incorrect percentage and must be changed, as UCC misunderstood the goal question. UCC has superseded its goal at 95%.

Lastly, there were questions about the cost of food. Has UCC looked for other resources for funding, and if they don't receive funding, will they have to decrease the number of meals served? Yes, UCC is actively seeking more funding and receives funding from other sources, which is still insufficient. No, UCC will not need to cut back on the number of meals served. Our commitment to serving meals to individuals in need is unwavering. Unfortunately, there hasn't been an increase in funding for the congregate and Meals on Wheels programs over the past few years, which has left the flat financing and no room to provide increases. Chair Miller asked the AAA Senior Dining Program Coordinator to forward UCC's concerns to the AAA Director Idzikowski and see if they could both help UCC address their needs.

- **Presenter:** United Community Center (Ana Castaneda)  
**Contract:** Transportation Services

The SDC had a few questions. **How far out do the buses go?** Anywhere in Milwaukee County, distance doesn't matter. **How are the buses used for transportation, medical appointments, and grocery shopping?** No. They are only used for transporting clients to and from the center.

- **Presenter:** Service Older Adults (SOA) of Southeastern WI, Miriam Kaja  
**Contract:** Home Nutrition Site Supervision Services

One of SOA's challenges is reducing the number of "no-shows," which produces wasted meals. There was one question SDC asked. There is a subset of two groups of clients, one that only comes to activities and the other only for meals.

**What is SOA doing to bridge the gap of getting older adults to attend both?**

One of SOA's goals this year is to research ways to break that barrier. Currently, they are scheduling programming close to the dining time to encourage those participants to have a meal, as well as after mealtimes to have an activity right after to encourage meal participants to stay for the activity. A committee member suggested providing some incentive to encourage participation in both.

- **Presenter:** Service Older Adults of Southeastern WI (Miriam Kaja)  
**Contract:** Social Programming for Five County-owned Senior Centers

The Committee asked two questions: Has SOA conducted outreach activities outside of its own events? Yes, SOA has attended events to promote the senior center. How does SOA recruit volunteers? SOA has been fortunate that the volunteers tend to come to us, so it has not had to conduct any recruitment.

- **Presenter:** Jewish Family Services (Liz Popowski)  
**Contract:** Late Life Counseling Services

The Service Delivery Committee had a few clarification questions. One question was regarding the two acronyms used in the presentation. The second was if JFS serves people of other faiths and religions. Yes, we do.

- **Presenter:** Vital Voices for Mental Health (Kimberly Zimders)  
**Contract:** Telephone Reassurance Services

SDC had two questions: why Vial Voices is not allowed to enroll people who are already in a program. Because they are already being engaged in a program and wouldn't need to have someone check-in on them.

Does Vial Voice limit its work to specific organizations with the same goals, or does Vital Voices work with everyone? Vital Vice works with all organizations and associations who think they can benefit from the program.

- **Presenter:** ERAS Senior Network (Darryl Anderson)  
**Contract:** HOME Chore (Household and Outdoor Maintenance Engagement)

ERAS provides seasonal yard clean-up, snow removal, and minor home repairs. A large majority of requests received are for transportation services. SDC had two questions. **What are the qualifiers for your services?** Most requests come from referrals, including IMPACT 211. ERAS's focus is not to turn anyone away.

Fulfilling requests depends on the capacity of volunteer support to meet the need. **Does ERAS have the capacity to cover the requests that come in?** Unfortunately, the requests ebb and flow depending on the season, and a waitlist is a reality now. Most of our volunteers are assisting with fulfilling transportation requests for medical appointments and grocery store trips.

- **Presenter:** ERAS Senior Network (Darryl Anderson)  
**Contract:** Volunteer Driver

The committee had a few questions. Requests are for transportation to medical appointments and errands. **What percentage of your drivers are older adults?** Older adults make up 80% of our volunteers. **How are you recruiting older adults?** We work closely with congregations. **What is the \$180,000 earmarked for if you are operating with volunteers?** It covers the cost of staff and the management of their matching program, matching volunteers with clients. They provide some incentives, like gas cards.

- **Presenter:** Hmong American Friendship Association (Zongsae Vang)  
**Contract:** Community Outreach and Access Services to Southeast Asian Older Adults

**What are some of the barriers that HAFA encounters working with other refugee organizations? Are you able to conduct outreach to these other agencies?** The committee's questions were about the barriers HAFA encounters when working with other refugee organizations are important. We all share the responsibility in addressing these challenges. The difficulty in getting clients to come in due to lack of familiarity is a significant hurdle. **Can we conduct outreach to these other agencies, or are the barriers of language, culture, and religion too great?** Yes, it's primarily due to the cultural differences and language barrier.

- **Presenter:** Legal Action of Wisconsin (WI) (Matthew Hayes)  
**Contract:** Benefit Specialist/Legal Services

**What makes up most of the cases you handle? Are they Medicare issues or something else?** Mostly, it's Medicaid/Title 19 and housing evictions. Our focus is assisting clients who are on low incomes. How many attorneys do you have that help with the issues? We have several attorneys and paralegals; they are divided in each of the areas (Examples: Senior Law, Unemployment compensation work).

Life Navigators had raised an issue that they had difficulty finding legal assistance with helping older adult parents of adult disabled children go through the guardianship process. Commissioner Wilberg suggested they contact Legal Aid; however, she was later told that Legal Aid doesn't handle those cases. **Commissioner Wilberg asked for clarification and an explanation as to why they don't do it. Also, are there other areas of Law that older adults may**

**need assistance that Legal Action cannot provide?** Representation is necessary for the person trying to obtain guardianship over someone else versus defending guardianship on behalf of the individual against whom they are trying to get guardianship. Senior Law's funding is through the Older Americans Act, which has specific regulations related to not providing representation for trying to obtain guardianship over someone. Regarding cases that we do not handle, it would be estate planning, wills, probate, etc. In some instances, we have been able to refer them to an attorney to assist them, but we don't handle those cases.

**What type of homeless cases are you seeing? Are they wrongful evictions? What are they?** The cases are non-payment of rent, evictions because the tenants can't take care of their apartments or themselves, hoarding, and problems causing disturbances in a building. **Do you find that probate and state planning are outside the scope of your services? As it is needed for older adults, we** get involved with individuals who are poor and have little savings, like with Medicaid planning Transfer by affidavit, or we refer them to someone who can help. We don't get involved in complicated estate planning.

- **Presenter:** Employ Milwaukee (Kiara Clayton)  
**Contract:** Senior employment Training and Placement

**Does technology seem to be a barrier for older adults?** Yes, we do offer digital literacy classes for seniors; however, they don't tend to join the classes. **How are the older adults being contacted? Does Employ Milwaukee contact them, or do the adults contact you?** They contact Employ Milwaukee. We also distribute flyers at the senior centers and events. **Are you connected to other outreach events?** Yes, we are. Chair Miller will send Jill Knight other free outreach opportunities for Ms. Clayton to use.

- **Presenter:** Riverworks (Anthony Myers,)  
**Contract:** Financial Navigation

The Committed just had a few questions. **Will Riverworks be in the senior centers, or are you hoping to be in them?** We are still working out the logistics for that to happen. **When Riverworks assisted the Social Development Commission clients with their taxes, did you have to start from scratch?** Yes, we did. **Did they have to file extensions?** Yes, we are still working with those 1,600 clients.

### III. DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS

Transdev has communicated that they will be ending its contract with Milwaukee County at the end of December 2024, so AAA/Service Delivery will release a new RFP for Transportation contracts to find a new vendor.

Emily Petersen, Advocacy and Policy Manager, informed the SDC about legal services and the Elder Benefit Specialist program. The State Department of Health

Services told the AAA networks that the federal government had ACL investigate the Benefit Specialists programs and found the program is not considered a legal service because the program specialists are not attorneys or paralegals. The program does not have attorneys or any legal professionals working in the program. The State of Wisconsin is out of compliance with federal law regarding legal services, except for Milwaukee County's AAA's Benefits program.

Jill Knight, Program Coordinator, informed SDC that she oversees most of the RFPs discussed in today's SDC meeting. Her update today is that they released an RFP request for programming and nutrition supervision services at Milwaukee County's five-owned Senior Centers. She announced that the AAA hopes to expand the new blood pressure initiative launched at Clinton Rose Senior Center to the other four County-owned senior centers. **Do you find that many of the vendors work together (that they have more synergy)?** Yes, they do – more than in the past.

Carrie Koss Vallejo, Programming and Planning Coordinator, reannounced that the RFP season is coming; she is looking for representation from SDC members and the Commission for the following RFPs: catering, transportation, and Senior Center. The Chair has requested that there be a standard protocol for when significant changes happen with a contract or RFP, that they come to the Chair of this Committee and the Chair of the Commission.

Claire Enders, Transportation Coordinator, provided a few updates on today's presentations. Reimbursement has been a challenge for ERAS volunteer drivers because private insurance companies state that the volunteers need to purchase commercial insurance, which is quite expensive. This is incorrect, and the AAA is working to correct it. Ms. Enders also announced that she is working on the 5310 Grant renewal and additional funding to reimburse the volunteer drivers.

All coordinators, Chair Amber Miller, and COA Chair Janice Wilberg thanked the SDC Committee, the coordinators, and the staff for their hard work and determination.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at **4:06 p.m.**

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Wilberg Moved, Behar Second.)

**The next Service Delivery Committee meeting will be held virtually at 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. on Thursday, October 10, 2024.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Vonda Nyang  
Executive Assistant