Supported Decision-Making

Work Group Minutes

October 5, 2015

Woodbrook Office Complex, Dover, DE

9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Members Present: Pat Maichle(DDC), Wendy Strauss(GACEC), Brian Hartman(DLP), Lexie McFassel (PG), Kyle Hodges (SCPD), Terri Hancharick (EPIC), Terry Macy (DDDS), Robin Coventry (Contractor), Cindy Mercer (DSAAPD), Gary Mears (DDC), Laura Waterland (DLP), Chris Long (DDDS), Vanessa Deloach (DDDS).

I. **Introduction of Members – Everyone present introduced themselves.**

II. **Report of First Community Practice Call – Robin gave a brief summary of the teleconference that included information on a tool that North Carolina has to share with us. The states of Missouri and Mississippi currently use a program called "Wings". Wisconsin's Elder Law program also uses "Wings". We had previously received information on this program from the DD Council in Washington, D.C. and we have some of the materials that are used for this program. This initial call was an introductory call for the grantees of this project to meet each other, primarily. A second call will be scheduled in the near future by Jonathan. Little details are provided for the expected gathering of this group in Washington in November. Lexie and Pat plan to attend to present as requested.**

III. **Research – Robin Coventry – Our contractor Robin continues to research information worldwide on the topic of Supported Decision-Making and shares it with the group via email and the Dropbox. In particular, she was asked to find information concerning the elder population to help build the knowledge base of the Guardianship Commission.**

There is a number of documents from Florida in the Dropbox that we could adapt for our needs as we begin to provide education in Delaware.

Texas sent some documents including forms that we could use. Richard Lavello is the contact that Robin has been working with to get information.

There was a discussion about whether or not we need a replacement word for "ward" to use in our draft bill. Replacement words that were suggested for consideration were "protected person" or "supported person". We will discuss this further.

In speaking with organizations across the country, Robin has found that many of them have not heard of SDM, including a number of DD Councils. Potentially, a national education initiative should occur with these organizations.

Not much has been found on pre and post evaluations. We may need to develop our own for each of our educational presentations, no matter the medium.

We discussed briefly the need for baseline data concerning numbers of guardianships petitioned for and those granted in Delaware so that after our educational effort we can see if there has been an effect on that process. We need to find out if that data is collected currently and how we can access that information for our reporting purposes. We also wondered if any of the other countries currently working on this issue have seen a decrease in petitions and granted Guardianships; including Australia, Ireland, and Canada. Chris has a contact in Australia and England and will reach out to that person to find out what they have to offer. She will report back at our next meeting, if possible.

IV. Next Steps for Advocacy for Code Change – We reviewed the current draft of language for a bill. We discussed possible changes to lines that need a little work based on a feedback received from staff at the Court. We need to add language to prompt an Ad Litem to do more to look at alternatives and report to the Court on those possibilities while working on a case. How will Ad Litems know about this alternative? Education can be provided by the Public Guardian's Office and we will need to develop this curriculum.

We also discussed the possibility of updating the petition application for Guardianship to include the option to consider less restrictive alternatives. What role can the Clerk of the Court play in this work? What information can be included on the Court web site to educate petitioners on the alternatives?

Lexie offered to re-write the draft for our next meeting with input from other group Members. She will also work on a comparison sheet that will include a spectrum of decisions that could be considered, such as was done with the work on DMOST.

Lexie will also approach the Chancellor of the Court and the Elder Law Bar to discuss this option.

V. Education Plan Development for DE – We decided to invite trainers from our agencies to have a discussion about the best plan for education/training in DE and the populations to which we need to bring awareness. These include Dina Alegra from the Public Guardian's

Office, Allan Zabach of DDDS, Teresa Ritte of the Ombudsman Office, someone from the Elder Law Program. Other opportunities are LIFE 2017, Transition Conference, Inclusion Conference, DelDeHub, State Web Sites.

We also need to invite AARP, Sr. Centers, Schools, Special Ed Directors, School Chiefs, Principles, Councils, the Medical Society, Nemours (Cory Nouri), Delaware People First, people with disabilities, families, and Non-profits.

VI. **Next Meeting Date – The next meeting is scheduled for October 26, 2015 at 9:30 at the DDDS Woodbrook offices, 1054 Conference Room.**

VII. **Adjourn – The meeting adjourned by 12:00 p.m.**