

Meeting Minutes  
11/7/17  
O'Connor Senior Center

**I. Attendance**

In attendance: Hunter Hancock; Katherine Moore; Sandy Booher; Pam Chesney; Bari Gerbig; Brenda Nicholson; Cindy Winterberger; Margaret Chuinard; Suzanne Bunton; Teresa Lawson; Susan Bradford; Kasey Stone; Mandy Scarbrough; Bill Tolley; Brad Hall; Vivian Shipe; Tim Howell; Deborah Spencer; and Joseph Winberry.

**II. People with Disabilities & Elder Abuse Discussion**

Hunter Hancock with Disability Rights Tennessee and Katherine Moore & Sandy Booher from disABILITY Resource Center chaired the discussion on how elder abuse affects people with disabilities.

Hunter opened the discussion by talking about what Disability Rights TN (DRT) does. DRT provides services to people with disabilities across the state with numerous issues, including employment discrimination, safety in schools, abuse and neglect, and access to community resources and services.

On the issue of abuse and neglect, DRT partners with APS and DIDD and can respond in cases where APS cannot or where they cannot substantiate abuse. They can go unannounced into facilities to talk to clients, inspect facility, and provide recommendations of how the facility can better meet the needs of clients with disabilities. DRT can respond to any setting where there is federal money received as they are federally mandated to respond. Most of their investigations occur in facilities, not private homes.

Big gap at the moment is a lack of community placements for people with mental illness. They often are locked up in Alzheimer's wing of a facility despite having a capacity to understand their situation. Also, there is a lack of communication support (and education for the community) for people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Investigators typically cover a wide geographic area. There is currently a lack of needed legal staff, but these positions should be filled soon. Training is something that DRT is looking into and plans to provide in the future.

Katherine Moore and Sandy Booher each took turns to describe the services of the disABILITY Resource Center such as advocacy, peer support, and independent living skills. Much of their work revolves around empowering clients to self-advocate. Joseph discussed a connection between ageism, discrimination, and elder abuse.

A story by Katherine illustrates how people may be viewed differently when they have a disability. There is a need to educate medical staff on the histories of people as this can return individuality to the client and make medical staff more understanding of that person's needs.

Sandy reminded that organizations need to take the time to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities so that they can participate fully as others do. This is something we need to work on as a society; we cannot take this for granted.

### III. Grant Updates

**Housing Subcommittee** – A subcommittee on housing for elder abuse victims was established in the summer after the CCR identified a need for emergency housing placements for elder abuse victims, especially those with medical needs. The subcommittee focused its attention on partnerships with assisted livings, elder foster care, and special population beds. Our work has identified two barriers for our community around these issues. 1.) More statistics are needed to prove the need for these services. 2.) Department of Health regulations makes it difficult for us to partner with assisted livings in an emergency situation.

*Next Steps:* Now that the elder abuse case manager has been hired, it will be easier to gather these statistics. This will provide us more empirical evidence moving forward. Also, members of the CCR have been invited to participate in quarterly TennCare housing discussions which include representation from the leadership of the TennCare office. The CCR is not able to lobby, but individuals can attend meetings and learn how TennCare is thinking about the issue of elder abuse as it relates to larger senior housing issues. Joseph will pass along the invites to these meetings as they become available; he encourages members to attend when able.

**Law Enforcement Trainings** – 389 KPD officers were trained under the grant during 2017. This number is as much as many communities will train during their entire grant. Knoxville will look to at least double this number before the grant ends next September. This training is an eight hour curriculum that is team taught by a local member of law enforcement, the District Attorney's Elder Abuse Unit, Adult Protective Services, and Helen Ross McNabb Center.

*Next Steps:* Knox County Sheriff Office Training will begin in January 2018 and proceed bimonthly through September 2018. About 400 officers are expected to be trained during this period.

**Advanced Training for Investigators** – The grant requires advanced training for law enforcement investigators. We surveyed the 105 investigators from KPD and KCSO who will be attending. Their interests were on financial exploitation and elder neglect/homicide. As so, we are looking to contract with Page Ulrey, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney with the King County, WA [Seattle] Prosecuting Attorney's Office and Karen Webber, forensic accountant and owner of Webber CPA, PLLC, in Rochester, NY that focuses specifically on elder financial exploitation. They will co-teach a curriculum on these subjects.

*Next Steps:* This event will be February 21-22 2018 with half of the required investigators attending the first day, half the second day. There is very limited seating, but may be an opportunity for some CCR members to attend. More information to follow.

**Direct Victim Services** – In 2016, we surveyed 338 elder care professionals & older adults to get their perspective on what was the biggest need for serving victims in our community. The majority feedback was that Knoxville had a number of valuable resources but it might be hard for older victims to navigate system alone; as such, the surveys suggested that a case manager that works out of the Office on Aging or senior center would be the best option for our community. Suzanne Bunton recently joined our office as a case manager with our program. Suzanne has 8 years experience working in case management and social work. During this time,

she has worked with children, older adults, and people with disabilities. She has worked some with DIDD, APS, and local court systems.

*Next Steps:* In order to make best use of Suzanne's time, she will be partnering with law enforcement and Adult Protective Services to serve clients in pre-identified areas. She will be reporting to Misty Goodwin at the Office on Aging as a member of the Project LIVE case management team. Suzanne will also be partnering with Joseph on some outreach activities throughout the rest of the grant period.

#### **IV. CCR Next Steps**

Joseph explained that the CCR would be wrapping up its diversity discussions in December. Beginning in January, the CCR would be shifting its focus to the systems-change process within our MOU partner organizations. This will begin with completing the systems-change evaluation of the Elder Abuse CCR and will progress through each MOU partner organization through the end of the grant period. This process is facilitated by workbooks created by the grant technical service provider, the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life. The point of this project is for each organization to identify areas where they can improve services for elder abuse victims—if needed or feasible.

MOU partners have agreed to put together a diverse committee from within their organization and work through their organizational workbook over the course of a few months. Joseph will get with each partner to identify when they could present in 2018. Any other CCR organization wanting to complete a systems-change process should speak with Joseph.

Joseph also encouraged members to begin thinking beyond September 2018 and the end of this grant. What has the grant accomplished? What are the gaps? Members should think about new funding opportunities, new focus areas, and new innovations so that this partnership can continue beyond the existing grant.

#### **V. Partner Updates**

Margaret Chuinard, TBI

- The TN Elder Justice Conference was a big success with nearly 300 people in attendance.
- The conference may move to a more central location such as Nashville.
- Opioid epidemic has lead to legal and staff changes
  - As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, so-called "pain clinics" will be audited by the Department of Health
  - 20+ new drug diversion agents to be hired across the state

Bari Gerbig, Elder Mediation Group

- One of 6 recipients of national elder mediation grant
- Currently looking at how this grant will be administered
- More details to follow

**O'Connor Senior Center – Silver Stage Players Holiday Performance**

- Titled: “Somewhere...Wonderful”
- Description: Old toys that nobody wants anymore end up in a yard sale at a senior home, and inspire new senior residents who also feel old and unwanted, to be more active – to DO SOMETHING – rather than sit around waiting to die.”
- The play was written by local playwright Jeanette Stevens who wrote “That’s What Friends Are For” a recent locally-made film about elder abuse starring members of the Silver Stage Players, an acting group for older adults in our area.
- The performance will be Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at O'Connor Senior Center.

**VI. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Elder Abuse CCR will be **Tuesday, December 5 from 2-3:30 PM at the O'Connor Senior Center**. This meeting will close out the discussions on diversity by talking about how elder abuse affects immigrants and refugees.