

MINUTES OF THE  
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
HUMAN SERVICES TECHNICAL COMMITTEE  
NOVEMBER 21, 2002

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandra Reagan, Southwest Community Network, Chairman	*Jose Mercado, City of Phoenix
Judy Bowden, Mesa United Way	Kyle Moore, DES/ACYF
*Margot Cordova, Valley of the Sun United Way	Susan Neidlinger, DES/DDD
Debra Detterman, City of Mesa	*Sheryl Pieper, City of Tolleson
Joan Ellis, RIS Blind Services	*Sylvia Sheffield, City of Avondale
Moises Gallegos, City of Phoenix	Mary Jo Swartz, DES/CSA
Steve Wise for Kate Hanley, Tempe Community Council	Paige Thomas, Glendale Human Services Council
Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert	Wayne Tormala, City of Phoenix
Sandra Holt, DES/AAA	*Margaret Trujillo, Value Options
Connie James, City of Scottsdale	*Patrick Tyrrell, City of Chandler
*Jeannie Jertson, Human Services Department	*Neal Young, City of Phoenix
*Mary Lynn Kasunic, Area Agency on Aging	
Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging	
Barbara Knox, DES/RSA	
*Ramon Leon, El Mirage Community Service Program	
*Dan Lundberg, City of Surprise	
*Doris Marshall, City of Phoenix	

OTHERS PRESENT

Rose Perez, Tempe Community Action Agency  
Linda Snidecor, City of Goodyear

\*Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

1. Call to Order  
Chairman Sandra Reagan called the meeting to order at 1:09 p.m.
2. Approval of October 17, 2002 Joint Human Services Coordinating and Technical Committee Minutes  
Mr. Morgan inquired about the title of the Human Services Campus. Ms. Thomas motioned to approve the minutes, and Mr. Knaut seconded the motion. The group accepted the motion unanimously.
3. Presentation on Discount Prescription Drug Cards for Low-Income Medicare Recipients  
Ms. Reagan introduced Mr. Chris Craddock from Pfizer, Inc., to discuss Pfizer's Share Card Program. Mr. Craddock explained that Pfizer recognized the need to

create a bridge for low- income seniors, until Medicare itself enacts a discount drug program. Over 250,000 seniors are currently enrolled in the program that began in February 2002. To enroll, the program requires the following: 1) enrollee must be enrolled in Medicare, 2) the individual must meet the income guidelines of \$18,000 for individuals and \$24,000 for households, and, 3) must not be enrolled or eligible in any other prescription drug plan or state-assisted plan. However, other pharmaceutical companies also have discount drug plans, and eligible individuals are encouraged to enroll in these other similar plans simultaneously. There is no cost or annual fee for the Pfizer plan, and individuals need not be on Pfizer prescriptions at the time to quality. Once a Pfizer prescription is needed, the fee is \$15 for a 30-day supply of each prescription. The fee covers the pharmacy's fees.

This program allows seniors to stretch their budgets further without jeopardizing other necessary expenses, and Pfizer is looking to get in touch with other human services organizations in order to enroll as many qualified individuals as possible. Further, Pfizer does not foresee Congress enacting a Medicare prescription drug benefit for low-income seniors anytime in the near future.

Mr. Craddock also distributed sample applications and contact numbers, and asked any organizations to let him know if they are interested, and he will work directly with that organization. Ms. Neidlinger inquired about other pharmaceutical companies with similar programs, and Mr. Craddock offered to send a comprehensive list of other such programs to MAG staff, which will be distributed to the Committee members.

Mr. Morgan thanked Mr. Craddock and complemented him on this program.

#### 4. Social Services Block Grant Funding

Ms. Reagan explained that an Ad Hoc Committee met several months ago to discuss the Service Intents, and agreed that some changes needed to be made to ensure clarity. She then asked several committee members to comment on Service Intents that relate to their areas of specialization.

Ms. Swartz responded that she doesn't see many changes, except for the number of qualifying individuals escalating. Ms. Swartz did explain that DES has to contract for services under the Taxonomy for Human Services section and under "emergency shelter services", and both require case management. In the Plan, case management was split out, and DES has no ability to report expenditures other than under the broader category of emergency shelter and transitional housing. Ms. Swartz recommended moving case management into the emergency shelter and transitional housing section where appropriate, since case management on its own isn't contracted for, but is simply a component. Under domestic violence's crisis shelter services, DES refers to "emergency shelter services" and in order to ensure a 1:1 system for data and expenditure reporting, these changes would need to be made.

Ms. Thomson inquired if there were other services besides shelter services that case management funding goes toward. Ms. Swartz responded that shelter, case management, and other appropriate supportive services are grouped together for contract purposes. Essentially, #8 should go under #1 in Shelter, and Homeless Transitional Housing's case management should go with #7 on the first page.

Ms. Reagan then asked about the "elderly" target group. Ms. Holt explained she discussed the language with her staff, and didn't have any changes.

The next target group, "Persons with Developmental Disabilities", was discussed by Ms. Neidlinger, who said all of her service intents will change. Information has already been shared with MAG staff, and further suggestions will be shared by next week.

Ms. Reagan reiterated that these suggestions will be extremely helpful to the Ad Hoc group, and additional recommendations should be sent to MAG staff within the next 2 weeks. She also said there is still no information available on SSBG funding, so the guidelines and amounts from last year will be followed for the time being. Ms. Reagan also explained the need for a small group to review the clarifications and recommendations prior to the January Advance. The following committee members volunteered: Jeannie Jertson, Wayne Tormala, Susan Neidlinger, and Jim Knaut. MAG staff will contact these individuals to move forward.

Ms. Neidlinger then asked if information on anticipated budget cuts is also welcome, and shared that 5 counseling services were cut and will receive no funding, including counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, social and recreational therapy, and speech therapy. The fees for these services are as follows: counseling, ranges from \$43.25-110 per hour, occupational therapy ranges from \$48-60 per hour, physical therapy ranges from \$48-52 per hour, social and recreational therapy is \$7.50 per hour, and speech therapy ranges from \$48-52 per hour. Funding for these programs has always been directed toward client services, and not to staffing.

Ms. Swartz then asked how many people were served or will be affected by this change, and Ms. Neidlinger responded that 3,200 non-ALTCS individuals were served previously.

Ms. Reagan mentioned that the group would be hearing from providers and agencies on this topic at the January Advance.

5. Presentation of the East Valley Needs Assessment Team

Mr. Steve Wise explained he was reporting on behalf of a collaborative effort, and that several members of this group are also committee members. Mr. Wise distributed a list of members, and said the group is now called "Building Blocks for the Future". The group was formed in response to shrinking resources and increasing need. A consultant will be hired to assist with the project, and the goal is to obtain local information. Information will be collected in a different manner in each

municipality. The timeframe has changed and a regional town hall is expected in September 2003. An RFP will be distributed for a consultant tomorrow. In-kind funds and donated resources will also be contributed to the project.

Focus groups and town halls will be used, and the data will be reviewed regionally in the Fall. Ms. Thomas then asked if the unique aspects of data to each city will be captured, and Mr. Wise responded affirmatively. Ms. Determan then explained that each municipality laid out their goals in a matrix, including what type of group meetings would they prefer and what issues to target, so that even though this is being done regionally, it captures each locality's specific circumstances. Ms. Thomson then inquired about a final report, and Mr. Wise answered yes, a report will be issued.

#### 6. Legislative Report

Monsignor Ryle spoke to the Committee regarding General Assistance (G.A.) funding. Individuals receiving G.A. funds must meet the following criteria: 1) are poor, 2) unable to work for 12 months because of physical or mental illness, and, 3) probably will qualify for SSI due to disability. G.A. is 100% state-funded. Monsignor Ryle reported that the good news is that poverty decreased from 1999 to 2000, but then increased from 2000 to 2001. Currently there are 11.3-11.7% of individuals living below the poverty line, and African-Americans and Hispanics tend to have higher poverty rates. Hispanic poverty rates in increasing quickly, possibly because of high immigrant rates and younger populations.

Monsignor Ryle also explained the U.S. leads the world in poverty, and pointed out that other countries are more willing to collect and apply tax funds to the poor. Arizona is 39<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states in its per capita tax rate.

He also pointed out that since 1996, when welfare reform was enacted, the percentage of children under the poverty line and those receiving cash public assistance has consistently decreased.

Monsignor Ryle then explained the structure of the General Assistance Fund, and said that in years past, disabled individuals weren't time-limited on how long they could collect this assistance. Last year, the state legislature tightened up the eligibility requirements. Now, the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) will meet next week to discuss the lack of funds for G.A. Individuals who lost their eligibility will now be seen in homeless shelters and other emergency providers, and local providers, faith-based agencies, and municipalities will feel the impact. The JLBC's pending recommendation is uncertain, but as of now, funding will run out for approximately 2,500 individuals.

He is also working with the United Way in the hopes they will send a letter to the JLBC, and suggested this Committee or individual Committee members could also send a letter. Mr. Jim Knaut then asked about the potential elimination of the entire G.A. program, and Monsignor Ryle responded that yes, it could be subject to elimination, but a Special Session of the Legislature would have to be called.

Mr. Jim Knaut then asked if this Committee could send a letter, to which Ms. Reagan suggested a joint letter from the HSCC and HSTC may be appropriate. Mr. Morgan moved to direct staff to write a letter to the JLBC and was seconded by Mr. Jim Knaut, and was unanimously approved.

7. January 2003 Annual Advance

Ms. Reagan reinforced the importance of Committee members' participation in this annual event, and asked for input on expanding the membership of this Committee. Volunteers were requested to review the Committee's bylaws in order to make any such recommendations at the Advance. Volunteers include: Mr. Wise, Ms. Thomas, and Ms. Neidlinger.

Ms. Reagan also asked for recommendations on speakers and topics at the Advance, to which Mr. Morgan responded that information on working with elected officials on the HSCC and information about potential impact of funding cuts would be helpful.

Mr. Tormala also encouraged the Committee to review last year's Advance meeting notes in terms of Committee membership and meeting formats. Mr. Wise also recollected that in the past, speakers on specific target groups presented at the Retreat, and that would be helpful again this year. Mr. Jim Knaut also mentioned "Protecting Arizona's Families" and their work to look out for all Human Services Programs, and they have made some progress working with elected officials. He suggested it is worthwhile to hear from this coalition.

Ms. Reagan reminded the group the Advance is scheduled for Thursday, January 30, 2002, from 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Flinn Foundation. Ms. Thomson then asked for members to forward any speaker or topic suggestions to her.

8. Call to the Public

None.

9. Announcements

None.

10. Adjourn

Mr. Morgan moved to adjourn and Mr. Jim Knaut seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.