

Attendance:

Kristy Besada, Meg Hamm, John Rowntree, Mike Apfelberg, Tom Woodward, James Jensen, Meta Vornehm, (speaker), John Spira-Savett, Carla Tolomeo, Pam Daris, Mary Francis Schonley, Allison Palm, Jocelyn Sharp-Henning, Karl Hester, Cindy Owing, Christa Tsechrintzis, Kelly Turney, Blake Tyler, Kim Hester

Meeting:

John Rowntree opened with interfaith prayer.

Introductions

Small Group Question, Meta: How are the needs of seniors changing and how are you responding? Identified challenges of transportation, seniors without offspring who are aging without family to support, need to be flexible to the leading of the Spirit.

Mary Francis Schonley: ServiceLink.

Every state must have an aging/disability resource center. ServiceLink is for the State of NH. Every county has a ServiceLink. Easter Seals is fiscal manager in Hillsborough County.

Options Counseling: broad understanding of range of services in community
Caregiver Program: Medicare involvement, drug comparisons for cost reduction
VA contract: Veterans directed home care in Manchester

What they do: take anyone who calls and try to help them find possible solutions if such exist. Topics include transportation, services in the home, how to get on Medicare/Medicaid. Attempt to educate people on long-term support services in NH, differences between in-home care/nursing care/ assisted living, cost effective solutions for issues, food assistance through state programs rather than food pantries. Choices for Independence (CFI)

Ask questions about the crisis, perceived needs, understanding of the problems. Some problems have immediate solutions: i.e. nursing care is needed but no beds are available. Would still help folks with the process of getting on lists for nursing homes and understanding the process of Medicaid as that is done.

Referral services for folks who have needs that ServiceLink cannot meet.

Can enter Medicaid information into the computer and schedule appointments, but DHHS makes actual eligibility determinations. Can act as liaison with DHHS for status updates on and troubleshooting with applications.

Caregiver program and Caregiver Specialist: Grant funded program for caregiver respite. This pays for help in order that the caregiver can get some respite time from caregiving.

Medicare assistance: not all Medicare programs have the same eligibility requirements. If denied for one, it's still possible to get others.

Interactions with clients can vary from 15 minute phone calls to longer calls and follow up calls. Once admitted to CFI (Choices for Independence), more follow up care is delivered. There is call management software that allows continuity. They also use home visits, zoom, phone, etc.

They do not get involved with Social Security Disability forms and processes. This should be handled through the Social Security Administration. Initial enrollment for Medicare/Medicaid must be done through the original administration, but they can help with determining which plan makes most sense.

At this time, it's taking 6 months to a year for a nursing home bed. ServiceLink advises folks to connect with nursing care facilities earlier in their processes.

ServiceLink also gives information about advance directives and powers of attorney.

Example of an easy call and a hard call: Easy call—older woman calls for the phone number of the gas station at the end of her road. Hard call—a son out of state and mother is living at home with dementia. There's no Durable Power of Attorney, so he can't get information about what's going on. Or family members have suddenly taken in elderly relatives with disabilities and are seeking assistance.

Many calls relate to dementia. Majority of calls relate to medical needs.

Mike A: Respite program through Gateways struggles with enrollment numbers. Why? Transportation, cost, hours, lack of understanding of need, or lack of capacity of the program to meet actual needs (i.e. it takes too long to drop off and pick up to get any time for respite.) While enrollments are increasing, some day programs in the state are underutilized.

Where is the office and who is there: Hillsborough County has an office in Manchester and one in the Senior Center. Three folk work in Manchester and two in Nashua.

ServiceLink: call 603-598-4709. Manchester: 603-644-2240.

Medicaid for in-home and institutional care are different applications requiring different information.

Choices for Independence (Waivered Medicaid through State of NH) Waiver income assets, waiver Medicaid. Pays for home services. Home health aid, financial and medical meals,

cleaning services, home retrofits, comes with a case management structure. Developmentally Disabled, Traumatic Brain Injury are other criteria that are covered through waivers.

After you qualify for CFI, you get assigned to case management through one of 5 agencies. DHHS determines eligibility. Qualifying financially and medically for CFI will likely qualify you for inpatient care in a nursing home. Biggest hurdle is staffing—you may qualify, but there may not be sufficient staffing to cover all needs. Not all families prefer Meals on Wheels food, but it's a meal they don't have to prepare.

Next item: Welcome new Vice President, Pam Deres.

John: Thank you for organizing Thanksgiving service. Feedback was very positive.

Meta (Treasurer): Very successful Grateful Ingathering service. The collection for Family Promise was \$533.75 at the service, and it is unknown how many donated through the QR code. That is comparable to pre-covid donation levels. Many thanks to all who participated.

Board is recommending that we match the funds from our funds for Family Promise. Mike Apfelberg so moves. Meg Hamm seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: with donation of Family Promise still in main account:

- Main account: \$3732.62
- CROP: \$2921.44
- Choir: \$685.72

Jon Spira Savett asks whether we have more money than we need in the CROP fund and whether we might apply some of those funds to the CROP donations to the community. Becky Green should be involved in that conversation.

Opening for announcements:

[Christa Tsechrintzis](#): Construction will begin on a single family home on Granite St. Nashua. Evening information sessions opening at the library and applications opening Feb 1. Also, new Critical Home Repair manager. This will ramp up in the new year and there will be a new online application. Announcements will be pushed out through NAIC.

Tom Woodward: Thanks to John Rowntree and CGS for hosting the Thanksgiving service.

Arlington St. Community Center holiday celebration Dec 17 from 2-4. Looking for religious and cultural groups to put up tables. Jessica Hague (sp) is director. Announcement will come out to the list.

Jon Spira-Savett - Work has been done in this room to make Nashua

Jon Spira-Savett TBA sponsoring a nosh at noon this Sunday Howard Smith cosmology and religion presentation.

Jon Spira-Savett: conversation with Kathy Boss with idea for a big, daylong extravaganza relating to death and dying, everything from theological to practical. If you're interested, reach out to Jon or Kathy.

Kathy Boss asked to announce a CGS Blue Christmas service on Dec 22 at 7 pm. Announcement to come.

Pam Daris: Alzheimer's & Dementia resource center has moved to 460 Amherst St. It's bright, airy and beautiful. Day Away program flyers were distributed. One on one volunteer to respite person. Through St. Joseph Hospital. Cost is \$15 for 6 hours. Fun, games, a great time for early to early-moderate Alzheimer's. Educational presentations are also available and suggestions for programs are welcomed.

Mike Apfelberg: February: Nashua Nor'Easter highlights Nashua Non-profits to raise funds for United Way. Also Shoebox project - annual way of connecting seniors to resources to care packages. This year's focus is senior mental health and wellbeing. 350-400 packages. The fall Sleep-out has been successful. This year, a Youth Sleep-out will take place. Youth groups are invited to build teams of middle schoolers and high schoolers with a small fundraising component. Goal is to build a smart advocacy core around homelessness prevention and care. Scheduled for early May.

Christa Tsechrintzis would like to come to individual congregations to talk about programs, including and especially the critical home repair program that is part of Habitat for Humanity.

