

APPROVED ON \_\_\_\_\_ APRIL 19, 2007 \_\_\_\_\_

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
CAC MEETING**

**MARCH 8, 2007**

**PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL**

**6:00 P.M.**

Present: Chairperson Nancy Emerson, Bob Layton, Algene Bailey, Lynne Langley,  
William Thorpe, Stephen Lichtenstein

Absent: Jean Pecunies (called), Dani Rooney (called)

Staff: David Moore, Program Manager

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Chairperson Emerson opened the meeting and recognized Ann Peters and Deborah Bartley who spoke on behalf of Lamprey Health Care's Info-Link Prescription Assistance Program. Ms. Peters explained that the program operates a prescription assistance program. She noted that the number of clients served in the program decreased from last year due to the new Medicare Prescription Drug coverage program at the federal level. She explained that the agency is providing fewer medications to eligible clients, but is providing counseling to people who are eligible for the federal program. She said there is some uncertainty about the future of the federal program and the most effective way that the agency will assist uninsured and underinsured clients to access prescription drugs. Ms. Bartley noted that most of the clients are over 65 years old and that 30% of those assisted are homeless. She explained that the counseling service is very careful to offer information versus advice on choosing Medicare Part D prescription drug plans. She indicated that many seniors would not be able to choose adequate plans without the assistance provided by the program. Chairperson Emerson thanked Ms. Peters and Ms. Bartley for their presentation.

Chairperson Emerson then recognized Helen Taft of Families First of the Greater Seacoast who spoke on behalf of the Dental Center Program. She said that the Dental Center had continued to grow. She indicated that 27% of the Dental Clinic clients are homeless. She said the program had expanded services to include service on Saturdays and it is receiving referrals from the Portsmouth Hospital Emergency Room after years of work to develop appropriate protocols. Ms. Taft explained that uninsured clients access services via a sliding fee scale. This means that more uninsured clients results in fewer dollars for the agency putting a strain on services. Ms. Taft indicated that there is more competition for federal and state grant funding. She indicated that she is seeking financial support through contributions from Portsmouth Regional Hospital, foundations, and increasing major gifts. Chairperson Emerson thanked Ms. Taft for her presentation.

Chairperson Emerson then recognized Keryn Kriegl of Families First of the Greater Seacoast Family Support Program. Ms. Kriegl said that in the last several years there has been an increase in Portsmouth clients served. She indicated that further outreach work is planned for the public housing communities at Gosling Meadows and Wamesit Place.

Ms. Kriegl discussed how performance measurement tools are used to provide input on the effectiveness of the programs offered at the agency. Specifically, she said that a series of “protective factors” are used which show stress reduction in households leading to positive outcomes. Ms. Kriegl also explained that the agency is participating in a statewide outcome measurement program where program clients are surveyed to assess progress in increasing their Protective Factors. Protective Factors are sustainable skills that families and individuals build to deal with a variety of challenges. Ms. Kriegl noted that the agency’s location at the Community Campus was a benefit to their clients. Chairperson Emerson thanked Ms. Kriegl for her presentation.

Chairperson Emerson then recognized Jen King, Community Relations Manager who spoke on behalf of the Senior Wellness Program. She said the Senior Wellness Program is a community-based service offering health and wellness clinics in convenient community settings. The goal is to promote and maintain the highest level of health and functional independence among the elderly. Services are provided by registered nurses and include blood pressure monitoring, foot care, blood sugar screenings, education and referrals to other medical providers. Ms. King stressed that this program was useful to keep some seniors who may experience subtle symptoms of serious diseases from slipping through the cracks. She said another program goal is to help people stay in their homes. The Committee asked for clarification of the agency’s plans to provide foot care services. She indicated that foot care is a major concern for the agencies population. Mr. Moore reminded the committee the Portsmouth Housing Authority had not applied for funding for the foot care clinics and stated that there would be no duplication of services.

Ms. King was then recognized to speak on behalf of the Compass Care Senior Companion Program. Ms. King said the Senior Companion Program is the largest of its kind in the State; it is funded, in part, by the Merrimack/Belknap Community Action Program. The program matches senior volunteers with free weekly visits to those who are isolated due to physical, emotional and/or cognitive impairments. The grant would be used to help fund the salary of the program’s manager, who is responsible for program outreach and matching senior volunteers with clients. Mr. Thorpe asked how Compass Care’s services differ from Area Home Care. Ms. King explained that Senior Companion volunteers have more time and freedom for activities and social interaction with the seniors and that Area Home Care Homemakers provide cleaning and errand services to seniors to help them remain in their homes and often don’t have time for the social interaction that a senior companion can provide. Chairperson Emerson thanked Ms. King for her presentation.

Chairperson Emerson then recognized Gordon McCollester, CEO and Ms. Judy Taylor CFO who spoke on behalf of the Homemaker Program of Area Home Care and Family Services. Mr. McCollester said that his agency has been forced to cut services to seniors because of a lack of funding. Specifically, he indicated that reimbursement from the State of New Hampshire is limited to services provided to those elderly who earn less than \$900 per month. He explained that the agency does not turn anyone away for services, but that the number of hours per client per week has decreased as a result of a lack of funding. Mr. McCollester said that the CDBG funds are used for the salary of one

of the homemakers on staff who serves Portsmouth residents. He said this particular staff member had been working for the agency for 16 years. He indicated that the agency has grown because it has signed a second contract with the state of New Hampshire to provide services to Western Rockingham County. Chairperson Emerson thanked Mr. McCollester and Ms. Taylor for their presentation.

Ms. Emerson adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.