

**MINUTES**  
**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HHSAC)**  
**Thursday, May 12, 2022**  
**Virtual Teams Meeting / Itasca Resource Center / Room 122**

<b>Members Present:</b>	<b>Renee Bymark</b> <b>Lester Kachinske</b> <b>Daniel Miesle</b> <b>Ben Denucci</b> <b>Angela Baratto</b>	<b>Crystal Terveer</b> <b>Dan Seward</b> <b>Lloyd Adams</b> <b>Dorothy Abrahamson</b>
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<b>Members Absent:</b>	<b>Cheryl Lemler - E</b> <b>Sarah Anderson - E</b> <b>Craig Menozzi</b>	<b>Brandi Worrath</b> <b>Dave Holmbeck - E</b> <b>Chris Jenkins</b>
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<b>Others Present:</b>	<b>Eric Villeneuve</b> <b>Brenda Oberg</b>	<b>Kelly Chandler</b>
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**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lester Kachinske at 12:15 pm.

**Approval of March 10, 2022, Minutes:**

A motion was made by Dan Miesle and seconded by Lloyd Adams to approve the March 10, 2022, minutes. Motion carried.

**Additions/Corrections to Agenda:**

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

**Eric Villeneuve, Director:**

**Public Health Update:** Kelly Chandler, Public Health Division Manager, updated the group stating they have seen an uptick in COVID cases in the last three weeks, with the rate being 27.5 as of May 12<sup>th</sup>. The hospital census is where they are normally at and manageable but will cautiously watch it. A second booster is being recommended for people over 50 or immunocompromised. There have been additional limits put on the Johnson and Johnson vaccine and the encouragement is to receive MRNA vaccines as they have more efficacy. The new cases are a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated people. Itasca County has 59% of their population vaccinated and 164 members of our community have died, 24 of those were vaccinated. Suicide grant funding was increased. Public Health is looking for ideas for training opportunities/topics for families or different sectors of the community surrounding addiction. If you have suggestions, please contact Kelly.

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**IMCare Update:**

Eric provided an update from Sarah, IMCare is currently working on submitting the request for proposal for their senior population and the children and family population.

**Legislative Update:**

Eric included two handouts on 2022 Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) Legislative Update and Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Federal Update in the agenda packet.

Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) Legislative Update highlighting a couple bills, the first being the Legislature passed a deal on unemployment insurance (UI) and frontline worker pay. The House and Senate approved the agreement that the conference committee passed. The agreement contains the following three significant elements: \$2.3 billion to fully replenish the UI trust fund and avoid a tax increase on businesses, \$500 million for additional frontline worker pay, and \$190 million from the general fund for Governor Walz to spend on state government expenses to address COVID-19. The Senate passed their version of the health and human services omnibus bill this week. Sen. Jim Abeler boasted the policy nature of this bill and its focus on workforce. He highlighted provisions in the bill that seek to make the most efficient use of staff in group homes; prevent group home closures; increase PCA, ICF (Intermediate Care Facility) and home care services rates; and increase compensation for non-emergency medical transportation. It also will increase nursing facility rates and make wage “fixes” within the elderly waiver framework. Senate mental health bill continues to move, there was discussion in committee about the implications of the increased appropriation for AMHIs (Adult Mental Health Initiative) and the fact that it would create ongoing financial obligation for the state past its current budget tracking document. Nonpartisan staff clarified that \$20 million was the amount to hold counties harmless. The Minnesota Senate passed the opioid settlement plan which will distribute \$300 million to local governments and the state to combat opioid addiction. The House passed the omnibus health and human services bill the week of May 2<sup>nd</sup> and the bill now heads to conference committee, which is began Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>.

Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Federal Update outlining the agreement on a frontline worker pay and unemployment insurance replenish package. A qualified worker is someone who was employed for at least 120 hours in more or more of qualified frontline work sectors from March 15, 2020, to June 30, 2021, was not able to telework due to the nature of their work, made less than \$85K/\$185K married joint or \$175K/\$350 married joint if they worked in an occupation with direct patient care responsibilities and did not receive unemployment insurance benefit for more than 20 weeks between the above time frame. County employees who meet the income qualifications and have worked (in person) in the designated roles will have the

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opportunity to apply for funding. County employers will be required to provide notice to all current workers who may be eligible for payments in a form prescribed by Department of Labor and Industry. They are predicting the application will be ready in June with a 45-day window to apply. You can sign up for email alerts at the following link <https://frontlinepay.mn.gov/>.

**HHSAC Subcommittee Reports:**

**AMHAC:** Dan updated that they had a care coordinator from Northland Counseling Center attend their last meeting to discuss care coordination and go over case management. Jeff Niemala with Niemala Mediation attended the last meeting and went over services he provides and plans to attend future meetings. Discussed gaps with PCA services. There is an 18-month pilot driverless program coming to the Grand Rapids area this fall. This will be free during the pilot and rides will be scheduled from an app and are available for ages 12 and up. The route is a 12-mile radius in Grand Rapids to from the Reif to Target and many stops in-between.

**ICCOA:**

Lloyd updated they had their first COA meeting yesterday with 11 clubs represented. These are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month and currently are providing a free meal and mileage reimbursement to encourage attendance. Renee from ElderCircle was the speaker at yesterday's meeting. TRIAD (The Right Information and Direction) attends our meetings and gives updates from the Sheriff's office, on scams etc. Tax Aid provided services for around 400 people this year. This number is much lower than past years due to not being able to meet in person. The church space may not be available for use next year so will be looking for another location to provide this service.

**Provider Updates:**

**Northland Counseling** – Angie updated they continue to work under a CCBHC (Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic). They were federal certified two years ago and are working with Minnesota DHS towards state certification. Staffing continues to be a barrier, but are working through it.

**Elder Circle** – Renee updated that 175 people had to be turned away from the Tax Aid program due to the restrictions by the IRS. Also, the space at the church is now looking for a rental fee, so will need to start looking for a new space to use for the Tax Aid program next year. Senior Day at the Pavilion will be August 11<sup>th</sup> this year. A lunch will be served, vendor fair, music, and awards for our volunteers. This used to take place at

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the fair but due to the large number of attendees, it was decided to hold it as a separate event at the Pavilion. Aces for Elders golf tournament is coming up July 21<sup>st</sup>, in hope to raise funds to support the medical transportation program. There continues to be a large increase for medical transportation. In 2021, ElderCircle has already provided 74,181 miles and reimbursed \$41,912. Renee stated they applied for COVID recovery dollars for the senior community to help rebuild and recover community centers and get more people coming out and socializing. They were awarded \$50,000 and the goal is to provide smart TV's, laptops, and computers at these centers. They've also applied for a Live Well at Home Grant to bring more activities, open houses, and events to these centers.

**First Call for Help** – Crystal updated they are very busy with calls. They went from answering 80-90 National Suicide calls to 812 this last month. They are the backup line for the whole state of Minnesota. Continuing to interview for staff qualified to answer these calls. Attended the Children's Fair in April and it was great to get out and participate in these outreach programs again.

**Other:**

The next meeting is September 08, 2022.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Advisory Committee, a motion was made by Lloyd Adams seconded by Dorothy Abrahamson to adjourn the meeting at 1:20 pm. Motion passed.