

**LINDA—RETYPE SEPTEMBER THROUGH MISSION
STATEMENT**

**Behavior Health on Deafness Sub-Committee Meeting
September 20, 2007
Independent Resources, Inc.
Wilmington, DE
9:30 am**

Present: Christy Hennessey (Chair), Helen McDonnell; Cliff Rodman; Barbara Schroeder; Loretta Sarro; and Kyle Hodges, Staff

Interpreter: Pamela D'Occhio

Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

- None.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the September meeting minutes as amended.

Chair Report

- DSAMH Consumer Advocacy Meeting

Mission/Objective Statement

- Interpreter Regulatory Update

Loretta gave the following update. Loretta did the follow-up and she had a discussion with HarrietAnn to find a solution on how DODHH will provide agencies with interpreter referrals. If Renata wants a list of certified interpreters in Delaware, Pennsylvania and the areas, Loretta will send the list from the RID web. Melissa Smith, the Planning Director of DSAMH, and Renata want to know what is the best for their agencies. HarrietAnn, Betsy and Loretta discussed that we already have a list of interpreters. However, if people would like a list of certified interpreters, I will refer them to the RID web list. Kyle noted that you have to be a member of RID; there is a fee to be on the list and the list consists of certified and non-certified interpreters.

Lois asked why RID is the only appropriate organization that is recommended for interpreters. There are other working interpreters that are members of state agencies that refuse to join at the national level. Lois also noted that not every working interpreter is willing to be a member of that organization. Secondly, certification is supposed to guarantee a certain level of skills. There are interpreters that have this certification; however, they are not good interpreters. People know non-certified interpreters that are very skilled depending on the situation or event. So, this makes it a challenge to depend on one organization. Also, you only have to pay dues annually to be listed. Lois said that there is no guarantee of skill level with any interpreter.

Kyle asked what Lois would suggest DODHH do to come up with a system that works for everyone. Lois said that until Delaware sets up a screening or evaluation, there is no system available. Lois suggested setting something up with Loretta's office, the interpreter would pay a fee but that still makes the requestor at risk for the skill level. The interpreter could pay a fee to be registered with Loretta's office plus provides a section of background—interests for interpreting are mental health, religion, children's event, etc. Also attach something that lets the public know that "we make no guarantee of the skill level of these interpreters". These are interpreters interested in interpreting in the State of Delaware. Then if the person, agency, etc. is not satisfied with the interpreter the office could establish a protocol for removing unqualified interpreters from the list. That way you have a system to eliminate the non-qualified interpreters. Barbara liked Lois' suggestion; and noted that in West Chester, the Center on Hearing and Deafness, (C.H.A.D.) allows deaf consumers can sign a waiver to work with a qualified but not certified interpreter. Kyle feels that it would be beneficial for the interpreter's to have one group that is unified. Kyle will send HarrietAnn an e-mail describing the discussion and invite her to a meeting. Kyle still believes it is a good idea for DODHH to, at a minimum, maintain the interpreter list.

Lois said that many states (Pennsylvania) are starting to pass laws that require interpreter certification. If you are not certified, you cannot call yourself an interpreter in that State. Lois has waiver documentation that states, for example: "I know Lois Steele is not a certified interpreter, but I am willing to use her service anyway. Also, she can share names of agencies so that are satisfied with her services. In Delaware, many people are concerned about a law that requires certification because there are not enough interpreters. In addition, there are not enough full-time free lance interpreters and it is hard to find interpreters with specific specialties. Barbara asked why there are not enough interpreters. Lois stated that Del Tech ran an interpreter course, but there were never enough students—so, they closed the program for an interpreter degree. Free lance interpreting is risky with no benefits and you never know if you are going to have enough work. A recent issue is relay interpreters are now being used full time; so that reduces the pool of interpreters in the State. Loretta added that there has not been a state RID for about four years, so there is no advocacy there. Some deaf and hard of hearing clients need to know the role of an interpreter and we need to educate them to know how to use an interpreter.

Lois added in summary, 1) eliminating the interpreter list from the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing was to protect the office itself without randomly giving out names without any kind of background check, the State needs to come up with a new system. This would make it more convenient for people in state to use. 2) Kyle added that he will invite HarrietAnn to attend the next CODHHE meeting and to say that we have had more discussion and realize what plan her office has established; however, some people may like to see another list maintained with a waiver with some type of responsibility, and we would like to meet with you to discuss a final conclusion. If HarrietAnn cannot meet at the CODHHE night meeting, maybe she will come to the BHDC meeting.

Lois added that you can get from RID's website two standard practice papers. One is for healthcare medical situations and one is mental health. These are written for interpreters to understand their role, but it is also given to the public to better understand the interpreter's role. Lois added that this material may be good hand-outs.

- Mental Health Training

Loretta had a meeting with HarrietAnn to discuss ideas for mental health training. We have two different trainings scheduled for 2008. Loretta and Betsy Tucker will provide a half day training/session called "Deaf Culture 101" to be included in DSAMHs annual brochure of available training for DSAMH employees. A date has not been set.

The Delaware Office of Hard of Hearing will also host a full day workshop for Mental Health Psychological Counseling for interpreters and mental health professionals who are interested in learning how to work with patients who are deaf and hard of hearing in a mental health situation. A speaker has been chosen and a flyer will be sent. Interpreters will be provided. CEUs will be offered for interpreters.

- Ideas to Serve the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in a Mental Health Setting

Barbara offered the following information. In the past, Barbara thought that Connections had a program in which deaf and hard of hearing individuals had the opportunity to make social contacts along with receiving psychotherapy and psychiatric services. She did not believe this service was still offered, but they are looking for therapists who could sign and provide these services again. Barbara thought that this Committee may be interested in helping to get the above program established again.

Kyle added that Kirsten Olson may be able to help us get something established. Christy will e-mail Kirsten (with a copy to Kyle) and see what is going with this program at this time.

Reports/Announcements

- Barbara announced that in October, at the Domestic Violence Task Force, Barbara will be presenting a thirty-minute DVD about providing services to meet

the needs of deaf and hard of hearing survivors of domestic violence. If anyone would like to borrow the DVD, it is available.

- DAD—Loretta announced that the Community Partnership Day will be held on October 6 from 8 am to dusk at Pavilion 4 at Lums Pond State Park (hand-out provided). Kyle will have copies of the CODHHE brochure and has asked to join Loretta at their table. Loretta agreed but has to ask her supervisor.
- GCEPD—a hand-out was provided on the October 23 luncheon awards ceremony at the Chase Center on the Riverfront in Wilmington.
- On July 29, 30 and August 1, Lois attended the National Interpreters in Health Care Settings membership meeting in Chicago, Illinois. The good news is that they are working hard to make progress on interpreting services for mental health. Lois is now a member of that committee.

The next meeting will be October 18 at 9:30 am at IRI, Wilmington.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kyle Hodges
CODHHE Administrator
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