

## AMC

### Human Services Liaison Group

#### Notes from January 22, 2010 Conference Call

**Present:** Commissioner Jan Callison, Hennepin, Judith Brumfield, Scott, Lester Kachinske, Itasca, Bob Meyer, Blue Earth, Commissioner Chuck Amunrud, Fillmore, Commissioner Jack Swanson, Rosseau, Tim Walsh, Scott, Tony Murphy, Beltrami, John Moosey, Chisago, Roxy Traxler, Mille Lacs, Kathy Johnson, Kittson, Tom Burke, Aitkin, Commissioner Kevin Vickerman, Murray, Dan Engstrom, Hennepin, Nate Burnett, Todd, Peg Heglund, Yellow Medicine

Kate Lerner (MACSSA), Patricia Coldwell (AMC)

1. **Performance Steering Committee Remedies Subgroup Report:** Judith Brumfield reviewed final report (sent to members via e-mail that morning) of the Performance Steering Committee subgroup charged to develop remedies for non-performing counties. Recommendations will be presented to the Steering Committee on January 28 and are due to the legislature February 15. There were a few changes from the last meeting. Among the changes are:
  - Addition of a Preface stating that this is a work in progress, acknowledging that remedies will have to evolve as the measures are developed;
  - Timelines for developing and implementing corrective action plans; specifying that this is a 3-4 year process, not an immediate sanction;
  - Addition of statement that fiscal penalties should not be so large that they significant impact the ability of the county/SDA to deliver services and should be 'scaled' to the degree of non-performance;
  - Clarification of extenuating circumstances;
  - A recommendation to connect back to the Results Accountability Council on how this is working;
  - Recognition of the need for technical assistance from DHS, within the limits of their resources. DHS does not have additional resources to provide technical assistance but suggests that, if there is less emphasis on compliance and auditing, resources could be freed up for technical assistance to counties.

Judith asked for feedback, particularly anything the group felt that counties would not be able to live with. Comments from participants:

- Acknowledgement that, while not desirable, fiscal penalties are needed to ensure compliance (and may be needed to get the attention of the county board that improvement is needed);
- Concern that there would not be enough money to make it feasible for a county to take on the responsibilities of a non-conforming county;
- Perspective that the document should reflect spirit of mutual accountability--state should also have to comply with performance measures and should be required to assist counties (Judith agreed but noted there is no requirement for this in this statute; this language is directed toward counties);
- Ongoing concern regarding counties with tribal issues—can the county be held accountable for outcomes when governance is beyond their jurisdiction (Judith said the subgroup acknowledged this and agreed to work on this as the measures are being developed).

Patricia asked if there are ways to share this information prior to the Steering Committee meeting, whether the Liaison group members had been sharing with other counties as the discussion had progressed. Members suggested upcoming MACSSA meetings and some said they had been discussing at monthly regional meetings.

2. **Update on Proposed Legislative Changes to the Service Delivery Authority Language:** Kate Lerner, MACSSA director, reviewed changes that DHS and counties have discussed and agreed to make it more possible to move ahead with counties forming SDAs. These include:
  - Clarifying that SDAs can be formed before all the performance measures are in place;
  - Removing some of the complexity of form in the memorandum of understanding to be developed by counties interested in forming an SDA;
  - Clarifying that the commissioner has the authority to waive state statute as well as request federal waivers and waive state rule;
  - Clarifying that counties may not participate *as a member* in more than one SDA but *may* work with other counties outside of their SDA;
  - Statement that the Council request the Legislative Auditor to review progress toward forming SDAs.

Patricia shared that both a MACSSA group and the AMC board had discussed these changes and agreed to proceed with bill language but keep the possibility of pulling the bill if it looked as if there would be changes made that would adversely impact counties. AMC, MACSSA, and DHS representatives met with Representative Thissen (original House author) on these changes last week and he has agreed to be the House author. Liaison group members requested clarification on the changes but no major concerns were expressed. Lester Kachinske suggested that, in the future, perhaps the language could be expanded to include potential waivers from MDH, as so many counties have joint human services/public health departments.

3. **Results Accountability Council:** Patricia said a meeting of the Results Accountability Council is to be scheduled for early February, schedules permitting. The Council 's role is to recommend formation of SDAs, including waivers to allow innovative proposals. Members include counties, DHS, and legislators. This will be an organizing meeting as well as an opportunity to suggest some new models. Members suggested bringing draft bylaws or a charter to the first meeting, as well as perhaps an overview of county issues.
4. **Tools for Communication Among Counties:** Association staff requested feedback regarding how Liaison Group members are gathering and sharing ideas with their county and surrounding counties, as well as tools from AMC/MACSSA that would be useful. Feedback and suggestions:
  - Northeast counties had recent meeting with commissioners, administrators, and human services directors, facilitated by ARDC. They agreed to continue to move ahead toward potential SDA.
  - Questions regarding how DHS is communicating on this among line staff; they don't all seem to be aware of this movement
  - Try to meet at AMC legislative conference in March.
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5. **Next meeting: in person at AMC Legislative Conference in St. Paul, March 24-25.** Patricia to find time and place.