



MINUTES

NYS Coordinating Council for Services Related to Alzheimer's Disease
and Other Dementia
Monday, March 17, 2025
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Council Members and Representatives:

Members Present In Person: John Cochran (NYSOFA), Dr. Denise Cavanaugh, Julie Kelleher (NYSOCFS), David Okrent, Esq., Dr. Carol Podgorski, Maxine Smalling (NYSOMH)

Members Present Virtually: Teresa Galbier, Dr. William Higgins, Catherine James, Michael Jabonaski (DOH), George Shaw (OPWDD), James Taylor

Members Absent: Dr. Louise Belzie, Elizabeth Smith-Boivin, Dr. David Hart, Jed Levine, Suzanne Sullivan (NYSED)

NYSDOH Staff Present: Katie Mahar, Tracy Sinnott, Kim LaBarge, Felicia Segelken, Cassandra Tsyn, Susanne Coburn, Rose Gardner, Michael Chittenden, Jessica Dell'Anno (DLA)

Others Present: Charles Williams (NYSOFA), Lisl Maloney (NYSOCFS), Donna de Levante Raphael, Bill Gustafson, Aameera Khan, Tamara Isaacs, Nathania Capriles, Persida Hernandez

Note: The meeting was conducted in-person and via Webex. The meeting was recorded.

Welcome, Announcements, and Roll Call:

Ms. Sinnott called the meeting to order at 11:01AM and conducted roll call. Ms. Sinnott introduced Michael Chittenden to the Council, as the Center Director for Home and Community-Based Services.

Ms. Sinnott informed the Council that a quorum was not reached, so the 2025 Council report will be approved at the next Council meeting if quorum is met. Ms. Sinnott recommended moving next quarter's Council meeting to April or May to ensure the 2025 report is approved on time.

Ms. Smalling requested another representative to attend in her place as she may not be available during the suggested rescheduled meeting month. Ms. Sinnott described the process of appointing an alternate designee. Mr. Chittenden emphasized the importance of secondary designees to help with achieving quorum and informed the Council the Department of Health is appointing an alternate designee for Michael Jabonaski.

Approval of Minutes from November 16, 2023, March 4, 2024, June 10, 2024, September 23, 2024, and December 9, 2024:

The minutes were not approved due to a quorum not being reached.

2025 Council Report Review/Approval:

The 2025 Council Report was not reviewed or approved as a quorum was not reached.

BOLD Update:

Ms. LaBarge provided an update on the Building our Largest Dementia Infrastructure (BOLD) initiative. Ms. LaBarge shared the public awareness campaign began January 2, 2025, with the message "Take Charge of Your Brain Health." Funding was provided both under the BOLD Cooperative Agreement and NYS Department of Health. The campaign was provided in English and Spanish, focusing on adults between the ages of 45-65 with chronic conditions, and who are disproportionately impacted populations. Results of the campaign will be reported at a future meeting.

Ms. LaBarge reported BOLD is collaborating with two Centers of Excellence for Alzheimer's Disease (CEAD), connecting with Federally Qualified Health Centers to develop a training curriculum focused on early detection. The pilot program is in the early planning stages between Glens Falls Hospital and Hudson Headwaters Health Network. Progress of the pilot will be reported at upcoming meetings.

Ms. LaBarge shared information regarding the Erie County Department of Health's work to incorporate Brain Health Education to the county. The next local health department that BOLD will work with is the Oswego County Health Department.

Ms. LaBarge reported the NYC BOLD Coalition has a draft version of their strategic plan. Once finalized, the strategic plan will be available for public view on the NYC website. NYC BOLD will be looking to implement the plan in September.

Mr. Taylor questioned the focus on the specific age group and asked if funding is available for a campaign focusing on individuals aged 65 and older. Ms. Mahar confirmed there are annual public awareness funds and this year the focus was with BOLD to encourage risk reduction activities. Ms. LaBarge summarized the trainings for local health departments are focused on the staff at that department, to then disseminate the information within that county. The trainings created through the Centers of Excellence for Alzheimer's Disease would be focused on physicians within the Federally Qualified Health Center or Health System. Mr. Taylor shared information about the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) will be rolling out education over the next two years to instruct family physicians about Brain Health.

Alzheimer's Disease Outreach and Education Legislation:

Mr. Chittenden shared information on new legislation for Alzheimer's education and outreach. A draft work plan has been initiated by the Department of Health team and was shared with the Council members. Council members discussed that the work that the amendment proposes is widely completed with NYS contractors through the Alzheimer's Disease Caregiver Initiative Grants. The amendment to the legislation will continue to be discussed in Council meetings and appropriate feedback will be provided to legislators.

Master Plan on Aging Update:

Mr. Cochran provided an update regarding the Master Plan for Aging. The Plan is entering its final phase and is awaiting final approval by the Governor's office before being released to the public. The Master Plan for Aging is a multiyear commitment encompassing different situations and outcomes for older adults in the community. Mr. Cochran reported the biggest focus of the Plan is addressing aging well throughout different stages. Mr. Cochran shared that older adults are being positively impacted by multiple state agencies, and the participation of multiple agencies throughout the state provided a well-rounded view of aging in New York State.

Mr. Okrent asked about next steps after the release of the Master Plan for Aging. Mr. Cochran shared the Plan will provide avenues the government can take to help aging services and identify what services can be improved or expanded upon. Ms. Kelleher elaborated on the importance of having a variety of perspectives on aging within this plan and when advocating for services to the government.

Member Announcements, Public Comments:

Ms. Smalling discussed programs through the Office of Mental Health, including a Tele-ECHO series for 60 skilled nursing facilities across the state that also provides those facilities with teletherapy and telepsychiatry. The Office of Mental Health has 24 mental health nurses providing ground support to skilled nursing facilities, including trainings and support on care plans. Ms. Smalling described the growth of the program, expanding through New York and now reaching the NY Veterans Homes. Ms. Smalling applauded the work of the Council as it brings attention to the impacts across the spectrum of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Mr. Cochran asked about services that focus on unhoused individuals with mental health diagnoses. Ms. Smalling shared information about the Safe Options Support (SOS) teams who are providing specific services to those who are homeless. The SOS team currently consists of a lead physician, noting an additional physician will be hired to focus on street psychiatry. The Office of Mental Health is now reaching out to various facilities, assessing and focusing on emergency room processes and appropriate discharges through appropriate training.

Mr. Taylor shared the importance of early diagnosis starting at the general practitioner level, referring to his previous statements regarding AAFP rolling out their education program for their members to feel more comfortable in early diagnosis. Mr. Taylor shared information on the United States Preventative Services Task Force (USPST) review of cognitive screenings during annual screenings. Mr. Taylor reported Voice of Alzheimer's will be introducing proposed legislation in April that will mirror the importance of exempting early onset Alzheimer's individuals from the waiting period to receive Social Security Disability.

Mr. Cochran shared NYSOFA's work on age-friendly health systems including emergency rooms and assisting with the aging population's mental health.

Ms. Maloney identified the importance of educating law enforcement on interacting with various dementia related events. Council members are in agreement that continuing to encourage education to law enforcement is essential.

Ms. Sinnott reminded the Council that an email will be sent surveying Council members about availability for a Council meeting prior to June 2, 2025.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.