



Washington State Council on Aging

Meeting Title: 2024 May Washington State Council on Aging Meeting

Date: 05/28/2024

Location: Zoom

	Members Present	Appointment		Members Present	Appointment
✓	Jean Kindem	At-Large East		Vacant	Association of Counties
	Gavin Carmichael	AAAD Southwest WA Advisory Council	✓	Susan Conniry	O3A Advisory Council
✓	Rep. Kelly Chambers (Dianna Hawkins, Leg. Aide)	WA House of Representatives	✓	Dennis Wheeler	Snohomish County AAA
✓	Suone Cotner	At-Large West	✓	Susan Kerr	Kitsap AAA Advisory Council
	Vacant	NWRC Advisory Council		Vacant (Melissa Howtopat)	Yakama Golden Eagle Advisory Council
✓	Deb Murphy	Central AAA		Guests Present	
✓	Michele Horaney	Lewis Mason Thurston AAA Advisory Council	✓	Cathy Knight	W4A
✓	Ron Vivion	At-Large West	✓	Walt Bowen	Senior Lobby
✓	Vacant (Michael Adusah sitting in)	ADS King County Advisory Council	✓	Georgiann Dustin	Guest, NWRC AC
✓	Bob Scarfo	Aging & Long-Term Care Eastern Washington Advisory Council	✓	Melanie McGuire	AL TSA
	Sen. Karen Keiser (Emma Hellthaler, Leg. Aide)	WA State Senate	✓	Cameron Akita	AL TSA
✓	Michele Blythe	Association of Cities	✓	Mary-Anne Grafton	WA Assoc. of Senior Centers
✓	Stephanie Carpenter	Southeast WA Aging and Long-Term Care	✓	Daniel Mueller	WSU
✓	Rep. Tarra Simmons	WA House of Representatives	✓	Cathy MacCaul / Ithzamar Valencia	AARP
✓	Bruce Dougherty	Pierce County Aging & Disability Resources Advisory Board			
✓	Karen Kiessling	At-Large East			



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Topic	Key Points and/or Decisions Made
Welcome/Introductions Review/Approve Minutes and Agenda	<p>Chairperson Michele Blythe called the meeting to order at 9:03am.</p> <p>Council approved the draft April's draft meeting minutes.</p>
Legislative Discussion with Representative Tarra Simmons	<p>Michele Blythe introduced Representative Tarra Simmons. Rep. Simmons represents the 23rd Legislative District and shared her background with the Council. She is a former registered nurse, an attorney, non-profit director, and advocate for behavioral health. Rep. Simmons has a history of overcoming adverse childhood experiences, including pregnancy at age 14, substance abuse recovery, and was the first in her family to graduate from high school.</p> <p>Aging Prison Population: Rep. Simmons discussed the growing issue of an aging prison population, noting that by 2030, over a third of the prison population will be 55 years old or older. She highlighted her personal connection to the issue, having been a RN in prison prior to her own incarceration.</p> <p>Healthcare Challenges: Senior face many healthcare challenges in prison, including the lack of electronic health records and the prison system's inability to adequately care for older adults. She expressed concern about the humanity of isolating seniors and the high costs associated with their care, which are borne by the state as they do not qualify for Medicaid.</p> <p>Legal Issues: Rep. Simmons noted the legal issues faced by the Department of Corrections (DOC), including lawsuits related to delayed cancer diagnoses. She also mentioned the lack of standard training for caregivers who are paid \$1 per hour.</p> <p>Sentencing Reform: Rep. Simmons is exploring sentencing reform as a solution to the issue of aging incarcerated populations. She emphasized the need to balance the impact on victims with the potential benefits of reform, such as cost savings from not having to build new, accessible prisons.</p>



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	<p>Prevention Over Punishment: Rep. Simmons expressed her belief in investing in prevention rather than punitive measures, such as the “three strikes” law and the elimination of the parole system in Washington, which have contributed to the aging prison population.</p> <p>Q&A</p> <p>Dennis Wheeler asked about the success of nursing facilities in prisons in other states. Rep. Simmons noted the Sage Unit at Cayote Correctional Center, which has around 50 beds, indicating that it is still insufficient capacity.</p> <p>Ron Vivion asked about the process for helping individuals in severe health conditions, possibly requiring hospice care. Rep. Simmons mentioned an expedited medical release process through Governor Inslee, but noted issues with delays, especially for terminal diagnoses, and the need for more reform.</p> <p>Stephanie Carpenter asked about the absence of a parole system in Washington and the potential for reform, and whether there are plans to partner with long-term care facilities for behavioral health. Rep. Simmons discussed ongoing conversations about a “second look” at sentences. She mentioned the possibility of resentencing for those sentenced as juveniles or before 1984. She also discussed partnerships with behavioral health agencies for reentry and the potential for making this a state law.</p> <p>Dennis mentioned a recent New Yorker article about the challenges of visiting incarcerated family members and asked about the impact of isolation. Rep. Simmons discussed the bureaucracy of getting on the visitation list, the reduced cost of calls, and the travel time for families. She also mentioned the lack of regulation around older incarcerated individuals.</p> <p>Bruce Dougherty asked for a brief description of reentry systems, specifically New Beginnings in Pierce County. Rep. Simmons praised New Beginnings and mentioned the different approach of state-run programs like Progress House in Pierce County. She also discussed the human dignity model used in Norway’s system and the need for more community-based organizations.</p>
Driver Study Interview Request	Cameron Akita introduced Daniel Mueller, a professor at Washington State University’s Division of Governmental Studies and Services (DGSS). Daniel is working with the Washington Department of



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Licensing (DOL) on a project to improve older driver safety in Washington State. This project is a directive from the Washington State Legislature, as outlined in HB 1125.

Daniel Mueller noted that DGSS, part of WSU extension, is an independent research unit often tasked by the legislature or state to tackle a variety of topics. In this case, they were asked by DOL to address HB1125. The project involves a comprehensive review of existing policies and a feasibility study to improve safety in at-risk older drivers.

The study aims to establish a medical advisory board, an appeals process, and potentially other roles for the advisory board. They are seeking input on its composition, functions, and communication process.

Another component of the legislation is to set up a driver assessment tool. They are seeking input on what should go into this tool, with existing tools from AARP or AAA as references.

The final task is to develop an implementation plan that preserves maximum driver independence and safety. The legislation is fairly vague, and they are now seeking input to develop the plan.

The report will be finished by mid-October and presented to relevant agencies in December.

Daniel Mueller invited interested individuals to contact him for interviews. These discussions, set at 1 hour, are designed to be open-ended and seek a broad range of input. All information gathered will be anonymous and follow research ethics guidelines.

Q&A

Bruce asked about the current system for revoking licenses due to cause. Daniel shared that he's not as familiar with the process, but mentioned there might be an online form for concerned individuals to fill out. He acknowledged that the process can be difficult to access and understand, and this study aims to address these issues.

Stephanie expressed interest in the study, mentioning a weekly caller dealing with this situation. She asked about options for rural communities without access to services like Uber or taxis and offered to



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	<p>participate in the study. Daniel noted that they had just completed a driver's education recommendation for younger drivers, with considerations for rural areas without driver's ed classes. He invited Stephanie to email him if she's interested in participating in the study.</p> <p>Mary-Anne Grafton, Chair of the Washington State Association of Senior Centers (WSASC), expressed her opposition to the bill when it was introduced last year. She shared her concerns with it being agist, reducing independence for older adults, and the potential to create increase isolation, especially for rural areas. Daniel shared appreciation for these comments to be included in the report.</p> <p>Daniel provided his contact information for those interested in participating.</p>
Residential Care Services	<p>Amy Abbott, Director of the Residential Care Services (RCS) Division in ALTSA, introduced herself to the Council. RCS is one of five divisions ALTSA. Amy outlined her plan to discuss RCS's role in regulating licensed programs, conducting inspections according to federal regulations and issues statements of deficiencies. RCS oversee a variety of facilities across three regions.</p> <p>Karen Kiessling asked about whether Amy had heard of the service provider Rippl Care in Seattle. Karen noted that she is a DPOA for a friend with dementia and that this provider offers virtual consults and caregiver navigation. Cathy Knight shared that Rippl is operating in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Association.</p> <p><u>Quality Assurance:</u> Amy explained that the program was started in 2014 to improve internal processes. The program reviews data, asks questions, and provides data to inform what's working. The Quality Improvement unit helps work through Corrective Action Plans (CAP) and Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) to improve processes.</p> <p>Suone Cotner shared an experience working with older relatives, where an Assisted Living Facility (ALF) did not accept Medicaid. She asked if they are required to accept a certain percentage of Medicaid. Amy explained that the Home and Community Services Division (HCS) regularly looks at the number of Medicaid beds across the state. By law, when a business opens, they are required to accept a Medicaid contract. She mentioned ongoing efforts to better incentivize these facilities.</p>



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	<p>Complaint Process: Any shared a link to the complaint process. Unsubstantiated complaints, which do not rise to the level of findings, are noted. If a complaint is substantiated, a Statement of Deficiencies (SOD) is sent to the provider within 10 days. There is a plan to establish a set date for correction.</p> <p>Civil Monetary Programs: Amy discussed the Civil Money Penalty (CMP) Funds and the Adult Family Home State Civil Penalty Reinvestment Program. These programs reinvest fines back into the provider type to improve the Quality of Life (QOL) for residents. This reinvestment is outlined in the Social Security (SS) act for Nursing homes.</p> <p>The process involves reviewing grant applications for the program, ensuring they meet requirements, and reviewing them with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Some examples of projects funded through these programs include music therapy, animal therapy, specialized wound care certifications for staff/train the trainers, access to the arts, the popular ElderGrow garden, and the Born to be Wild/Easy Rider cycling program.</p>
AL TSA Update	<p>Cathy Kinnaman, Director of Home and Community Services (HCS) at AL TSA noted seeing many people at the Aging Summit. The Multi-Sector Plan on Aging will involve lots of work moving forward.</p> <p>Cathy shared that HCS is in the early stages of budget proposals, and discussed the following work related to the legislative session:</p> <p>Implementation of SB 5440: This bill addresses individuals discharged from jails who are not restorable or competent to stand trial. If these individuals have Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), dementia, or a diagnosis of Intellectual Disability, AL TSA/DDA will serve them. This was implemented on Dec. 1, 2023.</p> <p>Workforce Development (SB 6811): Christine Morris (HCS) is working on this initiative, which involves adding additional family members into training access. There are ongoing workgroups discussing this, too.</p> <p>Paying Spouses as Paid Providers (HB 1694): HCS is developing a plan to pilot program to pay spouses as providers.</p>



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	<p>Rate Gaps: There are still gaps in rates that need attention, including Community Choice Guide Rates and nurse delegation rates. There's also a need for rate increases around Senior Nutrition/Home Delivered Meals (HDM) rates.</p> <p>Caseloads: ALTSA and Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are looking to reduce caseloads possibly down to 68:1 from 75:1.</p> <p>Assisted Technology: There are a couple of pilots around remote supports at ALTSA and home monitoring technology. ALTSA is continuing to ask for funding and would like to add this into waiver services.</p> <p>Housing/Employment Supports: Housing needs continue to grow, and there's a need to develop new options and get blocks set aside with Housing Authorities. There's more demand for the GOSH program than is available.</p> <p>Federal Regulations: There's a need to develop a funding package around Federal Regulations that have rolled out. This includes a requirement to develop a critical incident reporting system and a new grievance system for Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) clients.</p> <p>Acute Hospital Assessment Process: There was a proviso in the last session around whether Acute Care Hospitals could be doing functional assessments instead of HCS staff. Western WA University is working on a legislative report for this.</p>
Aging & Longevity Summit Debrief	<p>Bruce Dougherty and Bob Scarfo represented the Council at the Aging Summit. They shared their experiences and key takeaways:</p> <p>Bob was honored to represent the Council and ALTCEW. He noted the Governor's reference to "what would Walt Bowen do" at the beginning of the day. Bob appreciated the intergenerational work with 8-10 high school volunteers helping out and is looking forward to next year's meeting.</p> <p>Bruce reiterated Bob's thoughts and highlighted the collective energy in the room. He appreciated being in the same room as ALTSA leadership and mingling with others, including Amy Abbott.</p>



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	<p>Key Takeaways: The Governor spoke to concerns on housing and the need for more funding. There is a need to address workforce development too. Bruce noted that Anna Pinto da Silva did a great job facilitating the event. National AARP representatives presented a new approach to aging and longevity.</p> <p>Videos: Videos from the event are available for viewing.</p> <p>Bob noted his appreciation for Bea's retrospective on what has changed over the last 20 years.</p>
Break	
Partner Updates	<p>Cathy Knight, W4A Cathy reflected on the wonderful experience at the Aging Summit. She highlighted the special recognition given to Trudi Inslee by the Lummi Nation. Cathy also mentioned the upcoming October Conference. She noted that Bob Scarfo, Walt Bowen, and herself were the only attendees also at the 2013 Aging Summit.</p> <p>As an advisory board to the Governor and ALTSA, SCOA has a lot to consider moving forward, and many important issues to discuss.</p> <p>Walt Bowen, Senior Lobby Walt shared updates about the W4A and Senior Lobby Fall Conference scheduled for October 16 and 17, respectively. He mentioned the retirement of Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler and Senator Karen Keiser. Walt also discussed the upcoming long session for 2025, the reconstruction of the Joint Legislative Executive Committee (JLEC), and a study being conducted by the Senior Lobby in collaboration with the League of Women Voters. He emphasized the importance of housing and encouraged participation in Commerce policy discussions.</p> <p>Cathy MacCaul, AARP Cathy announced on the chat a candidate forum for Congressional District 6 on June 28, hosted by Key Peninsula News and AARP. The forum will be held at the Key Peninsula Civic Center and streamed via Facebook Live.</p>
Nominating Committee	Michele Blythe appointed Dennis Wheeler as Chair of the Nominating Committee.



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	<p>Dennis noted Suone and Susan Conniry as committee members. Dennis would be sending an email to members requesting any nominations for SCOA officer positions.</p>
<p>Excellence in Action Committee</p>	<p>Cameron Akita discussed the two Excellence in Action Awards (organization and Dennis Mahar individual awards). He will send out draft flyers to the Council and plans to notify AAAs in June.</p>
<p>Member Advocacy Highlights</p>	<p>Michele Blythe noted the ongoing topic to highlight Council Member's advocacy work. Last month, Bob discussed memory gardens, and this month Deb Murphy and Stephanie had topics to share.</p> <p>Deb discussed her 40-year experience in advocacy, including human rights, healthcare, and work with students. She highlighted her work helping individuals navigate the healthcare system, as well as working with AAAs to connect people to services.</p> <p>Stephanie discussed her work with seniors and those with developmental disabilities, especially in rural communities. She shared her experience in opening an Assisted Living Facility that accepts Medicaid and her ongoing efforts in palliative care and youth empowerment. Stephanie noted it doesn't take much to get involved with this work.</p>
<p>SCOA Response to Protocol Email</p>	<p>Ron Vivion opened the discussion on a document Karen Kiessling shared with Council, which touches on Council process and protocol. As some topics relate to Ron's role as Parliamentarian, he discussed the points in the document:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Topics for action must be on the agenda. However, Ron noted that new topics often arise during meetings. 2. Documents must be disseminated. 3. Draft documents must be prepared. However, swift action is sometimes necessary. 4. Limitations on members sending out communications were discussed and questioned. 5. Bylaws state that the schedule should be decided in September by a Council vote. 6. The executive committee's role in working with the Chair to develop the agenda and recruit individuals was noted. <p>Bruce clarified that the group serves in an advisory capacity and does not have fiduciary responsibilities regarding contracts.</p>



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	<p>Karen discussed the previous action of the Council to send a letter to legislators without time for members to review. She felt that this demeans the actions of the Council and emphasized the importance of respect among members and transparency in actions.</p> <p>Bruce asked whether any action was requested on this topic; no motion was made.</p>		
Public Comment/Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 11:47am.		
ACTION ITEMS		Assignee	Due Date
Send EIA draft flyers	Cameron Akita		ASAP
Request SCOA officer nominations	Dennis Wheeler		ASAP