

January 4, 2010 Physical and Mental Health and Wellness/Prevention Workgroup Notes

Present: Kathy Finstad, Susan Franklin Rena Kuberski, Glenn Most, Christine Schmidt, Colleen Shemesh, Jean Tesone, Lynn Weis, Dar Vriesman, Beth Heimbichner

Announcements: Quick review of timelines, additional March meeting scheduled for March 15, 2010.

Members of each sub-group presented their current findings with conjoint group discussion.

Increasing community awareness of unique needs of seniors:

Rena talked about her conversation with DRCOG and others. They provide their updated resource list quarterly and what a great asset it will be when their WEB site is up and running. TLC, APS and other community agencies do provide information about senior needs and services. There is also the Jeffco Resource Fair and Senior Law Day.

Glenn talked about the various organizations that provide education for seniors such as SRC, Blue Book, St Anthony's, LTCCFs/ALFs, Senior Reach, Silver Print Colo., DRCOG and TLTC. Lutheran Medical Center provides ongoing education in the community as well as "Grand Rounds" for professionals. Colleen mentioned that if our committee identifies educational gaps that LMC will consider providing education about those topics.

Group discussion then ensued regarding how seniors like to receive their information eg TV, computer, human contact and whether caregivers should be targeted to receive more information about seniors as well as employers perhaps. Susan said that she will locate the study she has seen regarding how best modes of distributing information to seniors.

Utilization of Wellness/Prevention programs.

Sub-group agrees that access to these programs needs to be enhanced and thus focused research efforts on how to best accomplish that goal.

Jean researched on-line fitness programs and has information available including ROI. She reported a study which found that if physicians recommend fitness programs seniors are 22% more likely to attend.

Jean noted that beginning in 2010 early retirees and their families may attend Silver Sneakers, that Silver Sneakers is free to seniors who have medicare advantage programs and members receive a "kickback" for attending.

Other: its difficult to find data to support wellness programs, information can be found regarding specific information and location of programs, and that physical therapists are allowed to assist their pts into transitioning into on-going fitness at rec centers.

Increasing Access to Reasonably priced Health Care

Kathy discussed Kaiser's best practices (please see handout) which she presented Using the template provided by Vicki previously. Kathy will continue to gather additional information as she is able to talk with more people.

Christine discussed the evidence-based Healthier Living Colorado Program which is available in communities in Colorado. This is a grant-funded program providing 6 week workshops to assist seniors in living with chronic health conditions. This program has been found to improve health and lower costs as well as reduce hospitalizations.

Christine also talked about the Hospital at Home program which provides services for seniors 65 and older that require hospitalization for COPD/CHF/cellulitis/CAP, etc. Seniors are able to avoid the complications of hospitalizations as providers bring diagnostics to home with MD/RN 24/7 clinical support. Pt selection occurs in EDs by criteria. This results in approx \$2,000 savings in health care costs.

Beth provided some information about PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) which is for those 55 or older who are deemed frail enough for the state to be certified for nursing home care. PACE is a voluntary program funded by medicare and /or Medicaid, which provides all needed medical and supportive services to enable people to maintain independence in their homes as long as possible. This program has demonstrated a decrease in nursing home admissions, shorter hospital stays, decreased mortality rate, and better self-reported health and quality of life.

Beth also spoke briefly about Elder Services of Okaloosa County in Florida. While they provide many services such as in-home non-medical care, ALFs, transit, congregate dining sites, disaster preparedness, volunteer opportunities for seniors, and social services among others, they do not address medical issues. A particular note of interest is that funding is provided by local support and fund-raising as opposed to grants or govt subsidies.

Beth provided a draft proposal for senior sliding fee scale clinics which have the potential of providing comprehensive senior services, meeting many of the previously identified gaps (please see attachment). Discussion ensued with the group deciding there is enough merit to warrant further research.

Adjourned---Small groups will continue their research and confer via email.

