

FULTON COUNTY LONG TERM CARE COUNCIL
MARCH 19, 2010 MEETING MINUTES REVISED 4/16/10

Date: March 19, 2010

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Wells Nursing Home, Inc. • 201 W. Madison Avenue • Johnstown, NY 12095

Attendance:

Christina Akey, FCPH

Connie Avery, Central Assessment

Marion Balch, Community Rep

Marc Butler, New York State Assemblyman

Cathy Cardillo, Legislative Aide for Senator Hugh Farley

Shery Cooper, Fulton County D.S.S.

Andrea Fettinger, FC Office For Aging

Ernest Gagnon, Fulton County Mental Health

David Gregoire, Alzheimer's Association

Margaret Luck, Lifeline Littauer

Gail Marsh, Nathan Littauer Nursing Home

Claudette Royal, Nathan Littauer Hospital

Steve Serge, YMCA/ Wells Nursing Home Board of Directors

Melissa Stock, St. Mary's Hospital

Lori Tambasco, Wilkinson, Adult Day Center

Neal Van Slyke, Wells Nursing Home

The meeting of the FCLTCC was brought to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman, Neal E. Van Slyke.

Neal started the meeting by thanking Assemblyman Marc Butler and Legislative Aide Cathy Cardillo for coming. He followed with an overview of the Council's history and purpose.

The Council comes together today to discuss the state budget and it's affect on Long Term Care agencies. The budget cuts are not only affecting nursing homes and adult day health programs, but all long term care agencies through funding, loss of revenue (federal Medicaid match) and staff cuts resulting in cuts of quality of care.

Neal asked the Legislatures –*Why, every year, are Long Term Care Services attacked?*

Assemblyman Butler: Opened by telling the Council it was great to be able to meet with them in this forum. In regard to Neal's question: the largest areas of spending in NY State are education and healthcare. They are simply the largest numbers. Next week will be critical in terms of the budget.

Cathy Cardillo: To add to Assemblyman Butler's response; New York State spends \$1B a week on Medicaid. She realizes we cannot continue to ask agencies to provide the same services for less money. The state needs to look at what Medicaid will cover- for example it has been noted that people with Medicaid go to the emergency room eight times more than someone with insurance and there needs to be a limit to those things.

L. Tambasco added: Many patients will take an ambulance to the E.R. because they cannot afford a cab and do not have access to a cab voucher- we are wasting resources.

D. Gregoire: Cuts come late in the year and agencies are not able to catch up. They already have a plan and budget set and after cuts a ripple effect occurs. Seniors are the fastest growing population and we need to be able to provide for them.

E. Gagnon sees cuts on both ends with OMIG. Agencies are not only being affected by rate cuts but audit cuts as well. This will put agencies out of business and once they are gone they are gone for good. The Medicaid billing system is not easy to use. More people are being approved for Medicaid but providers are not being reimbursed for their services. Providers are not accepting new patients or are dropping patients.

C Cardillo agreed something has to be done about OMIG. She went on to talk about what the Senate Republican Task Force is working on in regard to Combating Medicaid Fraud (read full report by following link: <http://www.nysenate.gov/files/pdfs/0317.Combating%20Medicaid%20Fraud%20in%20NYS.pdf>)

N. Van Slyke → M. Butler and C. Cardillo- *Has there been any talk for the system to change for the future?*

M. Butler- Has not heard anything.

C. Cardillo- There has been a push for community based services and home care but things are getting undone. Without the tools to stay at home people have to enter higher cost services such as nursing homes.

A. Fettinger- COLA may be cut from the budget and OFA may lose \$80,000 from their budget. This affects a large amount of people and will be devastating for rural counties. An agency may assume they are getting cost of living revenue and after cuts have to amend their budget and contracts.

E. Gagnon added that 2011-2012 will be worse.

N. Van Slyke spoke about FMAP funds. \$11B was available over last two years and only 20% actually made it to health care. \$1B is anticipated this year and using 400K would wipe out proposed health care cuts. We would be in better shape if FMAP funds came to healthcare and long term care services.

Neal commented how his staff and residents' family are approaching him, asking how the budget will affect Wells Nursing Home. We are comforted by the Legislature's understanding and support of long term care services.

Assemblyman Butler: New York is at the whim of whomever is in office. There has been talk about changing the start date of the fiscal year.

C. Cardillo: Two years ago everyone agreed to reform but no one carried it out.

M. Luck: There are a lot of mandates in our county, why are other counties not doing the same?

M. Balch: Mandate relief would be welcome.

Assemblyman Butler: Realizes we are restricted by mandates but money needs to be designated to specific services to ensure it is spent on what it was intended for.

On behalf of the Council N. Van Slyke thanked Assemblyman Butler and Cathy Cardillo for coming today and offered assistance with any additional information he or agency members could provide. He asked that they please take back our information and continue to support our services.

Assemblyman Butler thanked the council for providing information and writing letters to his office. They do read the letters and realize that responses have been slow especially this time of year.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45am.

The next regular meeting will be held at the Wells Nursing Home; Tuesday April 13 at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Shaffer, Receptionist
Wells Nursing Home, Inc.