

**Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
Transportation Workgroup
Meeting Summary
August 15, 2007**

Present: George Ducharme, Lisa Rivers, Jennifer Gorman, Cathy Ludlum, Jim Quick, Robin Wood, Varian Salters, Kim Corey, Ellen Lawrence, Noreen Shugrue, Mario Marrero, Jackie Rheaum, Tracey Mazrek, Glendine Henry

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 A.M.

1. Presentation on Job Access and Reverse Commute

Following introductions and approval of June's meeting summary, the workgroup members received a presentation on the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute program by Mario Marrero from the Capitol Region Council of Government (CRCOG). CRCOG is one of 15 regional planning organizations and represents 29 towns in the northern region of the state. CRCOG is also one of 6 Council of Governments in the state.

With the implementation of the Welfare to Work Program in 1996, many individuals found jobs but lacked transportation to get to work. At the request of the City of Hartford Mayor Peters, CRCOG convened a task force that included transit operators, social service agencies, metropolitan planning organizations and job development organizations to develop solutions to the transportation barriers.

Since 1996, CRCOG has utilized a combination of public transit, vanpool, and contracted transportation options to provide transportation to several hundred employees so they can get to work. CRCOG has also been instrumental in coordinating transportation services for employees to get to work at Stew Leonards. The Department of Social Services and the Department of Transportation provided funding for new transit routes to accommodate the needs of employees at the store. Approximately 60 (30 of which are TFA clients) people are currently utilizing the new bus service. Mr. Marrero reported that Rideshare needs groups of 5 or more for the service to be cost effective.

CRCOG also is an active participant in the monthly Job Developers' Consortium, which has been meeting for 9 years. The consortium meets to share and distribute information, conduct employer recruitments, discuss changes in bus schedules and boasts a jobs distribution system. CRCOG is also facilitating the transportation discussions regarding the Walgreens Distribution center in Windsor. CRCOG will continue to collaborate with Connect-Ability regarding the various transportation options and other transportation initiatives within the northern region of the state.

The workgroup discussed the cost of developing, printing and distributing the transportation guide "Getting on Board" for the Northern Region. The guide is a widely used tool for individuals, state agencies and businesses that need transportation information. However, the guide is only available in three regions of the state. The Job Access and Reverse Commute program provided funding for the Southwestern Region

transportation guide. The workgroup suggested that Connect-Ability provide funding for the cost of the guides for the Northern Region. Lisa Rivers (DOT) will provide a cost estimate and Glendine will present same to Amy Porter, the Project Director for Connect-Ability and the steering committee.

2. Taxi Association Presentation

Since the Taxi Association presentation did not take place the workgroup suggested sending the list of questions to the Association President. Glendine will follow-up and forward the list of questions to the Taxi Association President. The workgroup discussed the possibility of implementing accessible taxis and inquired about the feasibility of Connect-Ability providing seed grants for 1 or 2 accessible taxis as pilots. Criterion for selecting geographic area, number of accessible taxis, etc. has not been developed. Glendine will present this proposal to the Project Director, Amy Porter and the Steering Committee. Suggested by Cathy Ludlum, Glendine will contact the taxi authority in Portland, Oregon to assess their taxi system.

3. Potential outcomes and Data Elements

The workgroup reviewed and discussed the outcomes and data elements for the evaluation plan with Noreen. Noreen reminded the workgroup of the importance of evaluating all activities to show progress and posed the following questions to the workgroup:

- Based on the transportation barriers identified, what are the infrastructure changes the workgroup would like to achieve?
- What activities need to be implemented in order to address the barriers?
- Over the next year what are the benchmarks you would like to accomplish?

The workgroup reviewed the transportation barriers/challenges based on the MIG Needs Assessment:

1. Too expensive
2. Not Accessible
3. Unavailable
4. Unreliable

Workgroup members are to review the transportation barriers and choose 3 or 4 barriers they would like to work and provide them to Glendine before the next transportation workgroup meeting on September 19, 2007. DOT has some data that could be used as baseline measures. Noreen has offered to provide assistance if the workgroup needs help with the outcomes and data elements.

4. Resource Distribution

Glendine distributed an article on accessible taxis in New York. The city.limits.org article also highlighted other cities that have been able to provide more accessible cab service, such as Chicago, Montreal, Las Vegas and London, where the entire fleet is accessible to wheelchairs.

A copy of the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) Toolkit for Operating a Rural Transportation Voucher Program was distributed to the workgroup.

5. Next Steps

The workgroup agreed to review the barriers and provide Glendine with the top 3 or 4 barriers that they would like the workgroup to accomplish. Glendine will forward responses to Noreen.

Glendine will review the work plan, make necessary changes and provide copy to the workgroup.

Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, September 19, 2007, 10:00 A.M., at the Office of Protection and Advocacy, 60B Weston Street, Hartford.