**Benefits Planning Cross-Advisory Body Workgroup**

**Meeting Minutes- DRAFT**

January 23, 2024

This meeting was held via teleconference within the meaning of Government Code Section 11123.5.

**Workgroup Members:** Leeza Coleman (Virtual),Stephanie Crist, (In-Person), Jennifer Fischer, (In-Person), Michael Luna (In-Person), Jessica Popjevalo (Virtual), Naomi Ramirez (Virtual), Paula Tobler (Virtual), Taylor Winchell (Virtual), Scarlett VonThenen (Virtual)

(There were technical difficulties with Wi-Fi on site at the beginning of the meeting, which affected members who were in-person.)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting began at 2:01 p.m. and a quorum was established.

1. **Approval of November 2023 Meeting Minutes**

It was moved/seconded (Tobler/Van Thenon) to approve the November meeting minutes. Motion was approved by a 5-0-2 vote. (Yes – 5, Luna, Popjevalo, Tobler, Ramirez, and Winchell,); (No – 0); (Abstain – 2, Fischer and VonThenen).

1. **Overview of In-Home Supporting Services (IHSS)**

The California Department of Social Services provided an overview of IHSS, including funding and types of services offered. People who receive services must live in their own home and be a Medi-Cal participant. The types of services an individual can receive are domestic and related, non-medical personal, medical accompaniment, and special circumstances. Before receiving services, participants receive a needs assessment with a ranking of the types of services needed. There are 746,229 IHSS recipients, of which 62.9% are people with disabilities. There are currently 651,049 providers which are either live-in providers or relatives.

Members discussed and asked questions the following:

* Question about whether reading mail is an IHSS activity. Reading mail is not a recognized activity. Discussion later occurred by a member of the public and members of the workgroup.
* Question about the percentage of aged and disabled population under the age of 60 years old. Data is measured by using Medi-Cal and length of services is available on the website.
* Question on the average hours of 115, whether it is awarded or consumed hours.
* Question whether American Sign Language is included in data. Data showed the top 10 spoken languages.
* Question on percentage of relatives providing services. About 70% are related to the individual and 55% of those are live-in. The remaining providers utilize the public authority registry for providers.
* Question regarding IHSS as a benefit for undocumented recipients and providers and providing background check clearance. All labor laws should be followed.

1. **IHSS Discussion and Development of Policy Recommendations for Long-Term Care Supports and Services**

Members were asked what policy recommendations are needed based on the presentation and if there is any follow up needed.

* Providers should also be able to read mail.
* People who are on SSI/SSDI should not have to lose IHSS benefits if taking a position which offers health insurance.
* IHSS providers should be provided with basic information on benefit programs. Also, when talking about reading mail, one of the reasons for all the Social Security overpayments is because people do not read their mail.
* Income limits and shared costs are big topics to possibly focus on as part of the recommendation. There are cases of going from zero shared costs to thousands of dollars a month in shared costs.
* Discussion on removing income limits or increasing income levels. Three states do not have income limits.
* Financial literacy and education are needed.

1. **Review of Benefits Planning Report**

Executive Officer Aliferis-Gjerde provided an update on the report. Members provided the following feedback:

* More data is needed about overpayments and other parts of the report. There can be a cost analysis on the 12 WIPAS and how much money they are given along with DB101 users and costs. There is data out there and it could be utilized. Show why changing a policy is cost effective.
* Include number of benefits planners along with average case load and average salary.

1. **Agenda Items for Future Meetings**

Members requested two items for the next agenda – small group breakouts and data research.

1. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.