

Proposed MCAC Subcommittee on Long Term Care

Background

This subcommittee in MCAC has been in existence for a long time. Vera Mayer, who started the DC Coalition on Long Term Care in 1996, chaired it. As with the original intent of the Coalition, the District did not have a robust program regarding home and community based services. In fact at the time there was an imbalance with many residents with chronic illnesses being admitted to nursing homes. This was at a greater cost to the District since Medicaid covered most of these clients. In fact, establishment of this Coalition coincided with the Olmstead Decision in 1999 in which the Supreme Court stated that institutional placements of people with disabilities who can live in, and benefit from, community settings perpetuates the unwarranted assumptions that persons so isolated are incapable or unworthy of participating in community life. The Supreme Court state that "recognition and unjustified institutional isolation of person with disabilities is a form of discrimination reflect[ed] two evident judgments": 1) "Institutional placements of people with disabilities who can live in, and benefit from, community settings perpetuates the unwarranted assumptions that persons so isolated are incapable or unworthy of participating in community life"; and 2) "confinement in an institution severely diminishes everyday life activities of individuals, including family relations, social contacts, work options, economic independence, educational advancement, and cultural enrichment." Olmstead, 119 S.Ct. 2176, 2179, 2187.

Subcommittee Mission

The Long Term Care Subcommittee's mission would be to expand and improve the quality of long term care services to ensure that low-income Washington, DC residents with chronic care and/or disability needs can age in the community safely and with dignity. This subcommittee will give voice to this particular cohort.

Subcommittee Goals

The goals of the Subcommittee would be to: achieve three overarching goals in order to streamline and enhance the system of long-term care provision and enhance the quality of life for both aging and disabled DC residents and for home health care personnel. These goals are:

1. Expand access to long-term care services in home and community-based settings;
2. Improve the delivery of home care services including the quality of the home health workforce;
and
3. Decrease nursing home utilization.

Frequency of Meetings

The Subcommittee would meet at least every other month.

Methods of Communication

Meeting in person would be preferable but conference call sessions would also be acceptable when necessary.