

Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging
Board of Directors Meeting
09/26/07

A Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:13 a.m. by Board Chairman, Richard Lovelady. There were no proxies.

B. Approval of Agenda

- The agenda was approved; motion by Commissioner Cochran and second by Reverend Bynum.

C. Approval/Disposition of Minutes

- On page 4, the motion was changed to 'approved'
- Minutes were approved; motion by Judge Standridge and second by Mr. Reginald Holloway.

D. Executive Director's Report

- a. M4A Program Report: Kelly Flick presented the Status of Programs report and highlighted each program and its achievements for FY07. Commissioner Cunningham asked how we could reduce the number of individuals on waiting lists. Carolyn Fortner explained that we are working toward this goal through focus groups, partnerships with other agencies, grants and a sponsored meals program.
- b. Emergency Preparedness: Karen Blackmon presented to the board the steps M4A has initiated to prepare its agency and the seniors it serves in the event of an emergency such as hurricane, tornado and pandemic flu. She explained that the planning committee comprised of M4A staff is working to develop an in-house database of at-risk clients. She also stated that she and several other staff persons are participating in emergency preparedness committees throughout the region.
- c. Focus Groups:
 - i. DVT Switch- Carolyn explained that in February 2009 the federal government has mandated that all analog TVs be switched to digital TVs. She explained the impact that this will have on our seniors and how the government is planning to provide a stipend to individuals to assist with this transformation. Details are sketchy at this point, but as more solid information becomes available she will pass it along to the board and our seniors.

procedures for documenting administrative costs, M4A is confident that it is following the definition of administrative costs as per Medicaid guidelines and is, therefore, accurately reporting its Medicaid Waiver administrative costs.

ii. Unfixables - \$4,000.00 for FY 07, worked with ADSS to correct problems that could be fixed. Unfixables are rejected claims that Medicaid denies payment on.

iii. Low Center Participation - M4A will create an action plan to increase participation in the centers. The nutrition department will begin by tracking the number of participants versus total number of meals. M4A maintains that center participation is different than congregant meal participation; therefore, ADSS is not seeing the whole picture when it posits that M4A's center participation is low based upon meal participation.

g. Update on By-Laws and Conflict of Interest Policy

i. Carolyn explained that M4A is contracting with a law firm to update the by-laws and conflict of interest policy and asked each present board member to complete the current Conflict of Interest statement.

h. FY 2008 Policies and Procedures:

- The board was presented with a copy of the 'old' manual as well as the new manual. Discussion ensued: Mr. Lovelady suggested that employees not be paid for sick time upon departure from the agency. Reverend Bynum motioned and Mr. Holloway seconded. It was also recommended that a line be removed from page 33, line 26 - 8 members voted "yes", 2 voted 'no'. The motion was carried. The board unanimously approved the manual for distribution to staff barring these changes. Kelly and Carolyn thanked the board for their in-put and assured them the staff would be very pleased to have a comprehensive document in which to abide by.

i. FY 2008 Staffing Needs and Org. Chart: see attachment B. Judge Standridge suggested updating the organizational chart showing clear relationship between Executive Director and Receptionist. Mr. Holloway asked that the chart reflect whether staff were part-time or full-time.

E. Fiscal Director's Report

a. Audit Review: Dianne Nance reported that there were 3 audit issues. One being that the General Funds didn't balance because of bookkeeping issues. Secondly, the auditors asked for specific invoices that M4A couldn't locate. She has begun keeping better track of receipts now. And, thirdly, the auditors didn't want M4A to stamp Mr. Lovelady's name on the checks and recommended that only 1 person sign the check. Discussion ensued and it was ultimately decided that board members residing in close proximity to M4A would

d. Approval of New Policy Manual: Rev. Bynum made a motion to approve the new policy manual; Mr. Holloway seconded; all in favor.

e. Approval on 08 Annual Operating Element: Decision was made to move to next meeting in order to give Board time to review.

f. Approval of Disabled Dependent Policy: Motion was made by Mr. Cochran and seconded by Mr. Green to approve the Disabled Dependent Policy; all in favor. Carolyn explained that there had been a problem with defining a disabled dependent in relationship to congregant meals. Because of the potential for abuse (i.e., a disabled child who was not dependent on parent for ADLs), it was determined that a policy was necessary. See attachment C.

g. Approval to Discontinue to use Signature Stamp: It was approved that Commissioners Acker, Parker and Cunningham would be approved to co-sign checks plus one M4A employee. The motion was made by Commissioner Cochran and seconded by Rev. Bynum; all in favor.

H. The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on November 28, 2007 at 10:00 a.m., same location.

September 26, 2007

Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Introduction

In June 2006, Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging (M4A) underwent significant change due to the loss of its Executive Director and Fiscal Officer. At that time, the Interim Executive Director drafted a summary of findings, effects, and solutions that could be followed by the M4A Board, its new Executive Director and staff in order to bring greater stability to M4A.

In this update, the current Executive Director reports on the progress that has been made to address some of the internal weaknesses of M4A cited in the Interim Executive Director's findings.

M4A has also hired a consultant to rewrite all job descriptions, draft interview questions for each position, draft performance evaluations, and to make recommendations as to salary scales for each position. Once the consultant has completed his tasks, his recommendations will be presented to the M4A for consideration and approval.

Finding 3: Internal Communication and Program Development

There has been a lack of effective communication and follow-up between the Executive Director and some staff members, particularly some program staff. This lack of follow-up seems to stem largely from the enormous responsibilities of the Executive Director (See Finding 1). In addition, Program Coordinators were accustomed to coming to the Executive Director for minute guidance with regard to their programs.

Effects:

Some program coordinators have felt frustrated because they did not obtain the follow-up and direction for their program that they wanted. .

Certain ideas and projects were shelved because Executive Director did not have time to approve and follow-up.

Solutions:

The Executive Director has a qualified Director of Programs and Operations who communicates regularly with program coordinators to foster teamwork and community; the Director of Programs and Operations also regularly monitors each program to ensure that each program is meeting its core assurances.

Finding 4: Fiscal Budgeting of Programs

Program Coordinators have not been educated as to the source(s) of their program's funding. They have not been included in the development of their budgets nor have they been routinely informed of their expenditures.

Effect:

Solutions:

The Fiscal Director has corrected all FY 2005 findings of M4A auditors. In addition, the Fiscal Director has worked with M4A auditors to address other internal fiscal weaknesses of M4A. Those internal controls cited in the FY 2006 have already been corrected, except for the use of the signature stamp for M4A checks. This latter issue will be presented for the Board of Directors.

The Fiscal Director will work on written procedures for M4A.

Finding 6: Staff Background Checks and Drug Testing

The AAA does not have a policy which requires that staff members have background checks, drug tests, or credit checks (when advisable).

Effect:

The lack of background checking and drug testing opens the AAA to potential risk.

Solutions:

All new employees and potential hires of M4A undergo a criminal background check and MVR before employment by M4A. Any staff that is responsible for the money of M4A must also undergo a credit check.

In the near future, M4A will require fingerprinting and drug testing of its employees and potential employees prior to hire.

Finding 7: Nutrition Program

The nutrition program seems to have negatively impacted the effectiveness of the AAA as a whole. Much staff time has been spent addressing the day-to-day challenges and problems encountered by center managers and participants; the mayors and city clerks; and the homebound recipients and caregivers. The Nutrition Coordinator is having difficulty obtaining clear guidance from ADSS. In addition, there have been problems with the meal vendor (Valley). There are unclear expectations of responsibilities of the AAA and the cities with regard to the nutrition program.

Effects:

Conclusion

In FY 2007, the program and fiscal staff of M4A have worked diligently and worked hard to address the internal weaknesses of M4A and to build a seamless relationship between programs and fiscal. Strengthening this relationship has proved to positively affect all aspects of M4A. Fiscally, M4A remains conservative and healthy. In the next fiscal year the Fiscal Director and Executive Director will gain greater knowledge of the fiscal management of M4A so as to best budget for future needs and to project the needs of M4A into the future. Programmatically, M4A has expanded with program staff undertaking initiatives designed to enhance the quality of life of M4A's at-risk seniors and their caregivers. Through its various programs, M4A has partnered with community based organizations for professional development, outreach, and grant opportunities.

On its current path, M4A is poised to fulfill its mandate not only as a service agency for seniors and their caregivers but also to be the planning and development commission for seniors and their caregivers.

Attachment C: Disabled Dependent Policy

The Alabama Elderly Nutrition Program: Guide to Meal Services states that

... under the OAA, an AAA may establish procedures to allow senior centers to provide meals to the following individuals who may be under age 60: Individuals with disabilities who reside at home with and accompany an individual age 60 and over to a senior center. (9)

Although M4A does not have a written policy to allow disabled dependents under age 60 to receive a meal at senior centers when they are accompanied by a person age 60 or older, M4A has allowed center managers to order meals for adult disabled children dependent on a senior parent for care and who accompany the parent to the senior center for a congregate meal.

Recently, a center participant requested that the center manager provide a meal to her 52 year old son who attends the senior center with the participant. The son is on disability, lives with the senior center participant and has cancer but he is not dependent upon the senior parent for care. For example, the times that M4A has attempted to contact the 52-year-old son, he has been out with his friends.

Because M4A sees further problems may be created without a written policy, M4A has drafted the following guidelines to determine whether a disabled person under age 60 who accompanies a senior to the center is eligible for a congregate meal. The guidelines below are predicated on the determination that funding is available:

M4A may allow senior centers to provide meals to an individual under age 60 provided that:

- Funding is adequate;
- The senior center manager has obtained approval from M4A;
- The individual is an adult disabled child on SSDI or SSI and provides proof (SSDI/SSI check or Medicaid card);
- The individual is an adult disabled child dependent on the congregate participant for one or more ADLs and the individual is unable to live alone safely;
- The individual accompanies the congregate participant to the senior center; and
- The relationship between the center participant and the adult disabled child is parent-child.

ADLs (activities of daily living) include bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring, continence, and feeding.

Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging
Board of Directors Meeting
09/26/07

A Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:13 a.m. by Board Chairman, Richard Lovelady. There were no proxies.

B. Approval of Agenda

- The agenda was approved; motion by Commissioner Cochran and second by Reverend Bynum.

C. Approval/Disposition of Minutes

- On page 4, the motion was changed to 'approved'
- Minutes were approved; motion by Judge Standridge and second by Mr. Reginald Holloway.

D. Executive Director's Report

- a. M4A Program Report: Kelly Flick presented the Status of Programs report and highlighted each program and its achievements for FY07. Commissioner Cunningham asked how we could reduce the number of individuals on waiting lists. Carolyn Fortner explained that we are working toward this goal through focus groups, partnerships with other agencies, grants and a sponsored meals program.
- b. Emergency Preparedness: Karen Blackmon presented to the board the steps M4A has initiated to prepare its agency and the seniors it serves in the event of an emergency such as hurricane, tornado and pandemic flu. She explained that the planning committee comprised of M4A staff is working to develop an in-house database of at-risk clients. She also stated that she and several other staff persons are participating in emergency preparedness committees throughout the region.
- c. Focus Groups:
 - i. DVT Switch- Carolyn explained that in February 2009 the federal government has mandated that all analog TVs be switched to digital TVs. She explained the impact that this will have on our seniors and how the government is planning to provide a stipend to individuals to assist with this transformation. Details are sketchy at this point, but as more solid information becomes available she will pass it along to the board and our seniors.

- ii. Blount- This focus is group is interested in promoting the UWCA/M4A Senior Fund to area businesses for donations. The senior fund is in its final planning stages and information will be presented to the group as the brochures and other promotional materials are finalized. The roof at the Oneonta Senior Center has not been repaired as of date. The committee is interested in conducting outreach and sponsorship to the sponsored meals program as information becomes available.
 - iii. Chilton – This committee is examining the possibility of converting clients in close proximity to the center from frozen to hot meals. It must be determined if adding more hot meals can be delivered in the 2 hour delivery time frame.
 - iv. Shelby – The Net/Works Program has recently hired a full time program coordinator, Ashley Pittman and a part time faith based volunteer coordinator in partnership with UWCA. This program is funded by a grant through the UWCA that M4A co-wrote with Positive Maturity. It is a one-year grant that seeks to connect seniors in need with volunteers.
 - v. St. Clair – This committee has decided to pursue transportation and is in the process of meeting with governing bodies of each municipality to secure funding for improved or increased Class Tran transportation.
 - vi. Walker – This committee is examining the possibility of an adult daycare facility or at a minimum a geriatric social worker to reduce the abuse and exploitation of seniors in this county. M4A did not receive a UWCA grant to fund either of these projects. M4A is discussing with Positive Maturity the possibility of sharing a geriatric social worker in Walker.
- d. Status of M4A: see attachment A
 - e. Unfunded Meal Price increase: Carolyn reported that the Alabama Department of Senior Services predicted a 3.1% unfunded meal price increase because the state legislature did not make an appropriation. The actual unfunded meal price increase for FY 2008 will be 4.0%. Because M4A had unspent funds from FY 2007 (i.e., carryover) and because of county funding requests, M4A does not anticipate any meal decreases for FY 2008, although the expansion of meals may be limited to privately sponsored meals.
 - f. Meeting with ADSS
 - i. MW Administrative Costs – ADSS hinted that M4A had ~~high~~^{high} administrative costs for nutrition and for Medicaid Waiver. After investigation, M4A has learned it has the lowest nutrition administrative costs in the state. M4A's Medicaid Waiver administrative costs have decreased from FY 2006 to FY 2007. After reviewing its

procedures for documenting administrative costs, M4A is confident that it is following the definition of administrative costs as per Medicaid guidelines and is, therefore, accurately reporting its Medicaid Waiver administrative costs.

ii. Unfixables - \$4,000.00 for FY 07, worked with ADSS to correct problems that could be fixed. Unfixables are rejected claims that Medicaid denies payment on.

iii. Low Center Participation - M4A will create an action plan to increase participation in the centers. The nutrition department will begin by tracking the number of participants versus total number of meals. M4A maintains that center participation is different than congregant meal participation; therefore, ADSS is not seeing the whole picture when it posits that M4A's center participation is low based upon meal participation.

g. Update on By-Laws and Conflict of Interest Policy

i. Carolyn explained that M4A is contracting with a law firm to update the by-laws and conflict of interest policy and asked each present board member to complete the current Conflict of Interest statement.

h. FY 2008 Policies and Procedures:

- The board was presented with a copy of the 'old' manual as well as the new manual. Discussion ensued: Mr. Lovelady suggested that employees not be paid for sick time upon departure from the agency. Reverend Bynum motioned and Mr. Holloway seconded. It was also recommended that a line be removed from page 33, line 26 - 8 members voted "yes", 2 voted 'no'. The motion was carried. The board unanimously approved the manual for distribution to staff barring these changes. Kelly and Carolyn thanked the board for their in-put and assured them the staff would be very pleased to have a comprehensive document in which to abide by.

i. FY 2008 Staffing Needs and Org. Chart: see attachment B. Judge Standridge suggested updating the organizational chart showing clear relationship between Executive Director and Receptionist. Mr. Holloway asked that the chart reflect whether staff were part-time or full-time.

E. Fiscal Director's Report

a. Audit Review: Dianne Nance reported that there were 3 audit issues. One being that the General Funds didn't balance because of bookkeeping issues. Secondly, the auditors asked for specific invoices that M4A couldn't locate. She has begun keeping better track of receipts now. And, thirdly, the auditors didn't want M4A to stamp Mr. Lovelady's name on the checks and recommended that only 1 person sign the check. Discussion ensued and it was ultimately decided that board members residing in close proximity to M4A would

begin signing checks in addition to Carolyn and Kelly. Mr. Lovelady expressed support to this decision.

b. FY2009 Local Cash Match: Carolyn explained that ADSS would like all state funded meals in 2009 to have a 10% contribution match for the cost of meals. This wouldn't include all programs, just Title III. The match must be an actual cash match.

c. FY 2008 Budget – Dianne provided the board with hard copies the budget and explained in detail what the numbers meant. She stated that M4A hasn't gotten solid numbers for FY 08 yet. She also explained that the reason there is more money in 07 than 08 is because of a decrease in carryover funds. Mr. Holloway requested that the board receive an addendum to show all programs to get a complete picture of funding. A final copy of the budget will be provided to the board once it is completed.

F. Old business

a. Nominations, votes and appointments

- It was recommended that Rev. Bynum serve as Vice President, thus relinquishing his role as board secretary.
- It was recommended that Commissioner Acker serve as secretary.
- Commissioner Cunningham made a motion to support these recommendations. Mr. ~~Lovelady~~ seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved. *Acker*

b. Board Vacancies

- Carolyn stated that she would talk with K. Martin in Clanton for recommendations for Chilton County.

12:00 pm Adjourned for lunch

1:00 pm Resumed Meeting

G. New Business

a. Approval of 08 MOA's (contracts): Rev. Bynum made motion to approve all contracts and agreements; Commissioner Cunningham seconded; all in favor.

b. Approval of 08 Budget: Commissioner Cunningham made a motion to approve the FY 08 budget; Commissioner Acker seconded; all in favor.

c. Approval on 08 Staffing Needs and Org Chart: Rev. Bynum made a motion to approve the FY 08 staffing needs and organizational chart; Comm. Cunningham seconded; all in favor.

d. Approval of New Policy Manual: Rev. Bynum made a motion to approve the new policy manual; Mr. Holloway seconded; all in favor.

e. Approval on 08 Annual Operating Element: Decision was made to move to next meeting in order to give Board time to review.

f. Approval of Disabled Dependent Policy: Motion was made by Mr. Cochran and seconded by Mr. Green to approve the Disabled Dependent Policy; all in favor. Carolyn explained that there had been a problem with defining a disabled dependent in relationship to congregant meals. Because of the potential for abuse (i.e., a disabled child who was not dependent on parent for ADLs), it was determined that a policy was necessary. See attachment C.

g. Approval to Discontinue to use Signature Stamp: It was approved that Commissioners Acker, Parker and Cunningham would be approved to co-sign checks plus one M4A employee. The motion was made by Commissioner Cochran and seconded by Rev. Bynum; all in favor.

H. The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on November 28, 2007 at 10:00 a.m., same location.

Attachment A

Status of Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging

Carolyn G. Fortner, MA, JD, CIRS-A

Executive Director

September 26, 2007

Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 9

Summary of Findings..... 10

 Finding 1: Fiscal and Administrative Management..... 10

 Finding 2: Internal Structure and Personnel Policies and Procedures 10

 Finding 3: Internal Communication and Program Development..... 11

 Finding 4: Fiscal Budgeting of Programs 11

 Finding 5: Internal Controls and Guidelines 12

 Finding 6: Staff Background Checks and Drug Testing 13

 Finding 7: Nutrition Program 13

Conclusion..... 15

Introduction

In June 2006, Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging (M4A) underwent significant change due to the loss of its Executive Director and Fiscal Officer. At that time, the Interim Executive Director drafted a summary of findings, effects, and solutions that could be followed by the M4A Board, its new Executive Director and staff in order to bring greater stability to M4A.

In this update, the current Executive Director reports on the progress that has been made to address some of the internal weaknesses of M4A cited in the Interim Executive Director's findings.

Summary of Findings

Finding 1: Fiscal and Administrative Management

Too much responsibility was placed on the Executive Director and the Fiscal Officer

Effects:

The Executive Director and Fiscal Officer seemed overwhelmed by the avalanche of immediate needs of the Agency which prevented them from devoting time to some of the more important needs of the Agency.

Solutions:

Both the Fiscal Director and the Executive Director have administrative support: the Fiscal Director has a qualified bookkeeper and the Executive Director has a Director of Operations and Programs who liaises with the program staff. By creating these two positions, the Fiscal Director and the Executive Director have time to address the fiscal and programmatic integrity of M4A without sacrificing the efficient day-to-day operation of M4A and effective communication and teambuilding with the program staff.

Finding 2: Internal Structure and Personnel Policies and Procedures

The AAA lacks internal structure. There are unclear personnel Policies and Procedures for the AAA as well as a lack of job classifications, salary increases, and cost of living adjustments (COLAs). There is an unclear "merit" system and nonstandard performance evaluations. Performance evaluations have not been done consistently and timely. New staff was not always given proper job descriptions (expectations), I&R training, performance feedback, conditions of employment, etc.

Effects:

Staff insecurity, frustration, and instability.

Solutions:

M4A executive staff surveyed program and support staff to determine an action plan for overcoming staff insecurity and frustration. Thereafter, M4A retained a qualified law firm to overhaul its staff policies and procedures. Those policies and procedures have been mailed to M4A Board for review and approval.

M4A has also hired a consultant to rewrite all job descriptions, draft interview questions for each position, draft performance evaluations, and to make recommendations as to salary scales for each position. Once the consultant has completed his tasks, his recommendations will be presented to the M4A for consideration and approval.

Finding 3: Internal Communication and Program Development

There has been a lack of effective communication and follow-up between the Executive Director and some staff members, particularly some program staff. This lack of follow-up seems to stem largely from the enormous responsibilities of the Executive Director (See Finding 1). In addition, Program Coordinators were accustomed to coming to the Executive Director for minute guidance with regard to their programs.

Effects:

Some program coordinators have felt frustrated because they did not obtain the follow-up and direction for their program that they wanted. .

Certain ideas and projects were shelved because Executive Director did not have time to approve and follow-up.

Solutions:

The Executive Director has a qualified Director of Programs and Operations who communicates regularly with program coordinators to foster teamwork and community; the Director of Programs and Operations also regularly monitors each program to ensure that each program is meeting its core assurances.

Finding 4: Fiscal Budgeting of Programs

Program Coordinators have not been educated as to the source(s) of their program's funding. They have not been included in the development of their budgets nor have they been routinely informed of their expenditures.

Effect:

The Program Coordinators have been unable to effectively plan the fiscal year for their program because they have not been given budgets for their programs. Budget surpluses at the end of the year have been common.

Solutions:

The Executive Director has hired a qualified CPA who has worked with the Executive Director, program staff and ADSS to develop sound fiscal year budgets for each program.

With improved communication and relationship between the Executive Director and Fiscal Director, any fiscal concerns of program staff or ADSS are immediately addressed with an action plan and follow-through is mandated to ensure that action plans are carried out.

Program Coordinators are informed of their budgets and their costs on a regular basis or more often as requested by the Program Coordinator.

Both the Executive Director and Fiscal Director have worked together to overcome some of the fiscal issues of last year such as: Alabama Cares Program carryover for which an action plan was not developed and Medicaid Ombudsman funding that was not spent and had to be returned to ADSS.

The current Executive Director and Fiscal Director are still learning how to most effectively budget the funding of M4A, how to project future fiscal needs of M4A, and how to track fiscal and programmatic data pertinent to M4A contractors and Board.

Finding 5: Internal Controls and Guidelines

There are no written procedures for the internal fiscal controls of the AAA.

Effect:

The lack of clear guidelines opens the AAA to potential risk.

Solutions:

The Fiscal Director has corrected all FY 2005 findings of M4A auditors. In addition, the Fiscal Director has worked with M4A auditors to address other internal fiscal weaknesses of M4A. Those internal controls cited in the FY 2006 have already been corrected, except for the use of the signature stamp for M4A checks. This latter issue will be presented for the Board of Directors.

The Fiscal Director will work on written procedures for M4A.

Finding 6: Staff Background Checks and Drug Testing

The AAA does not have a policy which requires that staff members have background checks, drug tests, or credit checks (when advisable).

Effect:

The lack of background checking and drug testing opens the AAA to potential risk.

Solutions:

All new employees and potential hires of M4A undergo a criminal background check and MVR before employment by M4A. Any staff that is responsible for the money of M4A must also undergo a credit check.

In the near future, M4A will require fingerprinting and drug testing of its employees and potential employees prior to hire.

Finding 7: Nutrition Program

The nutrition program seems to have negatively impacted the effectiveness of the AAA as a whole. Much staff time has been spent addressing the day-to-day challenges and problems encountered by center managers and participants; the mayors and city clerks; and the homebound recipients and caregivers. The Nutrition Coordinator is having difficulty obtaining clear guidance from ADSS. In addition, there have been problems with the meal vendor (Valley). There are unclear expectations of responsibilities of the AAA and the cities with regard to the nutrition program.

Effects:

The AAA staff, especially the nutrition staff, and center managers have expressed frustration by the nutrition program, especially the paperwork. Nutrition staff feels unappreciated and AAA staff feels their program accomplishments are diminished by the negative image of the nutrition program.

Solutions:

Since October 2006, M4A has held regular focus group meetings in all five of its counties. These focus groups have not only been a forum for the community to express their concerns about the nutrition program but it has also been a forum by which M4A has received valuable advice and solutions for improving the nutrition program.

Also, M4A has experienced turnover in its Nutrition staff; this turnover has affected the consistence and stability of the nutrition program and M4A has acknowledged responsibility for the hardship this turnover has on its nutrition program and its center managers. However, the current Nutrition staff has a strong background in the food service industry and is focused on developing trainings and strategies to empower and encourage center managers.

The focus of the nutrition program and M4A is to build strong communities through relationship-building.

Conclusion

In FY 2007, the program and fiscal staff of M4A have worked diligently and worked hard to address the internal weaknesses of M4A and to build a seamless relationship between programs and fiscal. Strengthening this relationship has proved to positively affect all aspects of M4A. Fiscally, M4A remains conservative and healthy. In the next fiscal year the Fiscal Director and Executive Director will gain greater knowledge of the fiscal management of M4A so as to best budget for future needs and to project the needs of M4A into the future. Programmatically, M4A has expanded with program staff undertaking initiatives designed to enhance the quality of life of M4A's at-risk seniors and their caregivers. Through its various programs, M4A has partnered with community based organizations for professional development, outreach, and grant opportunities.

On its current path, M4A is poised to fulfill its mandate not only as a service agency for seniors and their caregivers but also to be the planning and development commission for seniors and their caregivers.

Attachment B: Organizational Chart/Staffing Needs

Attachment C: Disabled Dependent Policy

The Alabama Elderly Nutrition Program: Guide to Meal Services states that

... under the OAA, an AAA may establish procedures to allow senior centers to provide meals to the following individuals who may be under age 60: Individuals with disabilities who reside at home with and accompany an individual age 60 and over to a senior center. (9)

Although M4A does not have a written policy to allow disabled dependents under age 60 to receive a meal at senior centers when they are accompanied by a person age 60 or older, M4A has allowed center managers to order meals for adult disabled children dependent on a senior parent for care and who accompany the parent to the senior center for a congregate meal.

Recently, a center participant requested that the center manager provide a meal to her 52 year old son who attends the senior center with the participant. The son is on disability, lives with the senior center participant and has cancer but he is not dependent upon the senior parent for care. For example, the times that M4A has attempted to contact the 52-year-old son, he has been out with his friends.

Because M4A sees further problems may be created without a written policy, M4A has drafted the following guidelines to determine whether a disabled person under age 60 who accompanies a senior to the center is eligible for a congregate meal. The guidelines below are predicated on the determination that funding is available:

M4A may allow senior centers to provide meals to an individual under age 60 provided that:

- Funding is adequate;
- The senior center manager has obtained approval from M4A;
- The individual is an adult disabled child on SSDI or SSI and provides proof (SSDI/SSI check or Medicaid card);
- The individual is an adult disabled child dependent on the congregate participant for one or more ADLs and the individual is unable to live alone safely;
- The individual accompanies the congregate participant to the senior center; and
- The relationship between the center participant and the adult disabled child is parent-child.

ADLs (activities of daily living) include bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring, continence, and feeding.