Assisted Living Advisory Council (ALAC) Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 27th, 2023
10:00 AM
\*The meeting was held virtually via Zoom\*

ALAC members: Nicole Breslin, Kimberly Martone, and David Santos.
EOEA staff: Secretary Elizabeth Chen, Matt Casey, Liz Gallagher, and Trisha Marchetti.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by Secretary Chen.
2. Welcome and Introductions:

Secretary Chen thanked members of the Council, stakeholders, and members of the public for attending. She noted there is not a quorum present.
3. Approval of the Minutes:

The minutes from the April 25th, 2023 meeting will be presented at the September 26th, 2023 meeting.
4. EOEA Updates:

Secretary Chen noted that 1 Ashburton Place is undergoing a series of renovations. Several EOHHS teams, including EOEA, will be housed temporarily on the 3rd Floor for about the next year. This move does not interrupt the agency’s functions. Since the last meeting, Donna Bucca let the team know that she is stepping down and fully retiring from the aging services network. Sec. Chen offered her well wishes and a restful retirement. In addition, today is Nicole Breslin’s last meeting. Sec. Chen noted she will be missed, along with the energy she brought to this Council.
5. Presentation from MassNAELA regarding recommendations to improving ALR regulations:

Liane Zeitz, MassNAELA, felt that residents should be able to see additional information about assisted living residences, such as; summaries from certification visits, if any complaints against the residence have been substantiated, and who the owner is. Liane said without accurate information, resident needs might not be met. Currently data from ALRs is aggregated and only available annually, complaint information is not readily available, and ownership information is not available.

Kathleen Lynch Moncata, MassNAELA, noted currently, MassNAELA does not have a sense of how many incidents are reported to EOEA, whether at the facility level or overall. She said the national trend is to have information regarding substantiated complaints made public. She said putting this information online would benefit consumers trying to compare residences. Liane Zeitz, MassNAELA, believed it should be housed on EOEA’s website.

Kathleen Lynch Moncata and Liane Zeitz also suggested several changes that are statutory and would require legislative action, such as; licensing ALRs, giving EOEA the ability to fine residences directly, and require any facility providing skilled care to have on-site presence of nursing staff and remote availability 24/7.

Liane Zeitz, MassNAELA, added that ALR administrators (Executive Directors) should be licensed like nursing home administrators are. She suggested the general staffing minimum should be based on the ALR’s census. She also said ALRs should also have an Activities Director who is a licensed recreational or occupational therapist.

Kim Martone asked that the slides be shared with the Council members. She said that many of these changes would address concerns that consumers have. She volunteered to help in any way she could to help action some of these proposals.

David Santos supported the idea of having a nurse available 24/7, however, he noted it can be difficult to find the staff and to pay for them.

Nicole Breslin said it gets *dangerous* when residents no longer fit the model and try to stay there without private 24-hour care. She said she has had difficult conversations with family members in order to find the most appropriate location for their loved one. She noted that residents that develop Parkinson’s Disease often need more assistance, like 1 to 1 time.

Elissa Sherman, President – LeadingAge MA, said the group could work together on what is the most helpful information for consumers and to make it available.

Secretary Chen thanked the MassNAELA for their presentation and for all the thoughts offered so far. She reminded attendees that the charge of ALAC is to provide guidance to EOEA on the ALR regulations, but that changes to statute are outside of the Council’s purview. She asked Kim Martone to work with the industry representatives and come back at the next meeting to report on which recommendations might be appropriate for ALAC to consider.

Matt Casey, General Counsel – EOEA, noted that there would need to be a balance between releasing information to better inform the public and ensuring it was released in a way where the information would not make the subject of a complaint identifiable.
6. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 10:53 AM.