Assisted Living Advisory Council (ALAC) Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 26th, 2023
10:00 AM
\*The meeting was held virtually via Zoom\*

ALAC members: Mary Jo Boynton and Brian Danaher.
EOEA staff: Secretary Elizabeth Chen, Matt Casey, Marie Earnshaw, Liz Gallagher, Trisha Marchetti, and William A. Travascio.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 AM by Secretary Chen.
2. Welcome and Introductions:

Secretary Chen thanked members of the Council, stakeholders, and members of the public for attending.
3. Approval of the Minutes:

A quorum was not present for this meeting. The minutes from the April 25th, 2023 and June 27th, 2023 meeting will be presented at the December, 2023 meeting.
4. EOEA Updates:

Secretary Chen noted that there is a newly released COVID-19 vaccine for Fall 2023. She hoped that ALRs are beginning to schedule vaccine clinics. EOEA has received a letter from LeadingAge MA and Mass-ALA regarding vaccine requirements for ALR staff. Changes are in the process of being made, it is not EOEA’s intention to have a higher standard for ALR staff than DPH does for nursing home and rest home staff. Last week was Falls Prevention Awareness Week, EOEA encouraged its aging network partners to promote a toolkit that included helpful resources for older adults, caregivers, and professionals. According to the National Council on Aging (NCOA), every 11 seconds an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury. As a follow-up to feedback from the members of the Council over the last 2 meetings, EOEA is convening a small working group of industry partners and consumer representatives to make edits to the Resident Transfer Coversheet and the Resident’s Rights Poster that were presented at the April 25th, 2023 Council meeting. EOEA will make edits to these materials based on the workgroup’s feedback. These will be reshared with the full Council in advance of them being released.

Matt Casey, General Counsel – EOEA, added that the regs regarding the vaccine requirement for ALR staff are in process and hoped that EOEA would have them soon.

Trisha Marchetti, Director of Assisted Living Certification & Compliance – EOEA, hoped that OnBase (the program that will be replacing Dynamics) will be launched by the end of the year. In addition, she expected that January re-certifications could begin as early as December. Unannounced visits will begin in December, they will take place within 30-days before or after your anniversary date. EOEA is beginning a quarterly call with the ALR network beginning next month, this is an opportunity for EOEA to share with the industry what we are seeing out in the field. This also provides the industry with an opportunity to ask questions. Attendance is not required.

The Secretary noted that one of the Council members, David Santos, wanted to share some recommendations that he has for the Council to consider. However, since he is not in attendance today, that should be pushed to another meeting.
5. Updates from the Consumer Council Members:

Mary Jo Boynton mentioned that in the ALRs she has been in recently, residents and staff are calm and responsive. The declining COVID-19 cases have put people more at ease.
The Secretary flagged for the Council members that in two of the last three weeks we have seen more than 100 new cases among ALR residents. She reiterated the importance of getting vaccinated and suggested that ALRs hold 2 vaccination clinics. This is because older adults should be vaccinated for Flu, COVID-19, and potentially RSV. Two clinics would allow for these vaccinations to be spread out.
6. Industry Updates:

Brian Danaher said that Benchmark Senior Living is in the process of scheduling their clinics. He added that certification visits and license renewals have been done in a timely manner.

Brian Doherty, President and CEO of Mass-ALA, mentioned that Mass-ALA has done outreach to their members to see how scheduling for vaccine clinics has been going. Some ALRs have already had their flu clinics and they are working with their pharmacies to get COVID-19 vaccine clinics scheduled. Mass-ALA’s annual awards dinner took place this summer, the lifetime achievement award was presented posthumously to Mass-ALA’s former board chair Larry Gerber, who passed away in March. The keynote speaker was Jackie MacMullen, a sports journalism trailblazer and former columnist for the Boston Globe and ESPN.

Elissa Sherman, President of LeadingAge MA, added that LeadingAge MA’s annual awards event is coming up in a few weeks in October. LeadingAge MA recently launched their 12th annual leadership. It’s a 9-month program for emerging leaders in the ALR network. It helps them to develop leadership skills, such as working as a team and conflict management. This year’s cohort is made-up of 24 individuals.
7. Comments from Visitors:

None.
8. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 AM. The next meeting will be held in early to mid-December 2023.