

Community Alliance of Sarasota County

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Developmental Disabilities Work Group Special Meeting with SCAT Plus

September 29, 2008

Meeting Summary

Members Present: Susan Magers, Chair
Morgan Howell, Loveland Center
Teresa Johnson, Parent
Connie Mawby, Community Haven
Capt. Richard Montemagno, Sarasota County Sheriff's Office
Kameron Partridge, Easter Seals of Southwest Florida
Ryan Stoyles, Community Haven
Benny Weaver, Loveland Center
Kim Williams, Florida Center for Children and Families
Mary Ann Zyla-Smith, Easter Seals of Southwest Florida

Guests: Beverly Kent, SCAT
Bill Little, Sarasota County Health and Human Services

Staff: Chip Taylor, Human Services Manager
Pauline Tracy, Human Services Policy Coordinator

Susan Magers welcomed everyone and introductions were made. The intent of the meeting was to discuss the recent policy change to the SCAT Plus plan. Under the new policy which goes into effect January 2009, agencies will be charged an additional \$5 per day (\$2.50 per trip). Loveland Center has calculated that the change will cost their agency an additional \$102,000 annually.

Beverly Kent explained the process which was taken to approve the new plan. The reason for the change was to involve the provider agencies more in transporting their clients. She stated that for the current year, budget was not a factor in the decision to change the policy; however, if the policy had not been changed, SCAT would be facing budget problems next year. SCAT currently provides more services under their premium services than is required. Although there was very little lead time given to the agencies, there were two grant opportunities earlier this year for agencies which could be used to purchase vehicles. Ms. Kent stated there will be more opportunities next year.

Ms. Kent stated that SCAT has been charged by the BCC to assist the agencies to find innovative ways to deal with the change. She stated they are willing to discuss a compromise. Ms. Kent provided a spreadsheet detailing the current charges, the

proposed charges under the new plan and a “compromise” rate for 11 Med-Waiver clients who currently have transportation listed in their support plan. The compromise rate is 70% of the current rate. Based on the compromise rates for these 11 clients, SCAT would have to absorb \$93,445.20.

The group agreed that it is important that they work on a collective approach with SCAT and the provider agencies together to address the issue. The question was asked if the policy change could be delayed until October 2009 as most of the provider agencies present could begin transporting clients by January 2009. Ms. Kent stated that would be up to the BCC and encouraged the group to come up with innovative ideas to make this work.

The work group decided to ask other providers to calculate the cost to their agency as a result of the policy change and send the information to Pauline Tracy who will share the total community impact at the next Developmental Disabilities Work Group meeting on October 14. The group felt it is critically important to share this information with the BCC so they understand the impact to services. The human impact also needs to be shared. It was suggested that since Senior Friendship Centers will also be affected by the policy change, they should be invited to attend the October 14 meeting.

Ms. Kent was asked to provide the current costs to provide the premium service to the individual agencies. She will also invite Anthony Beckford, General Manager of SCAT, to the October 14 meeting.