

**Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) Advisory Board Meeting
Held October 7, 2010 @ 2pm – KCDHH Conference Room**

Members Present: Ms. Betty Timon, Mr. Louis Fowler, Mr. Shannon Caldwell, Mr. Jeremiah Ziehr, Ms. Mindy McGirt, Mr. Johnny Lawson, Mr. Forest Skaggs, Mr. Jim Stevens and Mr. Eddie Runyon

Member Absent: Ms. Nina Coyer

Staff Present: Ms. Virginia Moore, Ms. Rowena Holloway, Mr. Cole Zulauf and Ms. Wilma Wright

Communication Facilitators: Ms. Shannon Grider, Ms. Rita Zirnheld-Thomas and Ms. Laura Kogut

Ms. Timon, TAP Advisory Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm. Members introduced themselves and the organization or entities they represent. Ms. Timon completed the roll call, and as there was a quorum present the meeting continued. Mr. Runyon, the new Outreach Coordinator for Hamilton, Kentucky's Relay provider, was asked to speak next.

Mr. Runyon announced that he is replacing Mr. Jeff Carroll who took another position. Although Mr. Runyon has not officially started with Hamilton he wanted to attend today's meeting to introduce himself. Next week he will attend training in Nebraska. The goal is to see faces, have people get to know him, and every six months make rounds around the state trying to meet people and help with outreach, education and awareness. KCDHH will partner with Hamilton on the expanded outreach. Members were given an opportunity to ask Mr. Runyon questions about the Relay Services.

Next on the agenda, Ms. Wright presented the last quarter Outreach report on and members were given an opportunity to ask questions about the report. Ms. Holloway reported on getting many positive responses back from all the outreach and asked members if they knew of any needs in their area. Members will email to let us know and we will set up some local advocacy in the area.

Members were asked to be trained on the new equipment and to become advocates and trainers for new users in their areas. Demonstration cabinets are being set-up throughout the state and trainers would use these to assist new applicants in making appropriate suggestions. Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and several agreed to become trainers / advocates. Ms. Wright will follow up with training in the near future.

Mr. Zulauf reported on statistics for the most recent quarter, and noted that TAP has received 539 requests during that time frame, a dramatic increase from last year. 170 of those applications are complete and in receipt of equipment, with 248 applications pending additional information and 80 that are approved and ready to order. 103 wireless applications are ready for review, with 14 pending order. Members were given an opportunity to ask questions about the report.

Ms. Holloway provided members with an update on the new equipment contracts and reviewed the insert listing the new devices. The Deaf-Blind Communicator, although not shown on the insert, can be ordered by special request. For anyone to order the device, which is expensive, they must prove they are certified to read Braille and have a wireless account. Any other equipment that would benefit deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired, or deaf-blind that members are aware of, should be referred to TAP staff for research and possible inclusion in the program. The number of landline devices offered was streamlined as we felt we were offering too many of the same phones and consumers were getting confused. We kept the Captel phone and it has been upgraded to the 800/800i. The 800 Captel is for wired lines, and the Captel 800i is for internet usage. We have the standard TeliTalk speech phone that is connected to the landline and seems to help the laryngectomy consumers; Mr. Lawson has been great in promoting this phone and was asked to recommend any wireless device that might assist speech impaired consumers. The RC200 was kept, as we have some ALS consumers that need that kind of device. We kept one TTY, as many consumers used these during electrical outages last winter. We offer only one signaler, which is a combination of audio and visual notification and can be used on a separate device in the home. We do offer a Tactile Signaler for videophone consumers, or those with a vision or mobility issue that demands such equipment. Wireless devices are being provided by ATT and GreatCall, per contracts with the state. ATT provides four devices (Blackberry Bold, Motorola Backflip and the iPhone 3 and iPhone 4). GreatCall provides the Jitterbug for seniors or those wishing to have simple devices that provides both voice and text capabilities. These devices can be upgraded by the consumer after the initial package expires and they assume responsibility for the monthly payments, or additional devices can be added to the contract in some situations. Consumers have had many questions related to the distribution of these phones, and staff is responding accordingly. Members were asked to take this information back to their areas and assist in clarifying the service package and the device usage limitations to the people they interact with to dispel some of the misconceptions out in the community.

Ms. Moore provided a more comprehensive update on the addition of wireless phones to the distribution program and explained the service package offered. Kentucky is the only state that provides service along with the device and many states have contacted us asking about the program. The average price of equipment (i.e., Pro80 Gold or

CapTel) is \$500 without service, so the wireless package is comparable. The monthly service package was negotiate at \$35 a month for ATT and \$43 for Jitterbug and will be honored ongoing without a credit check if the consumer does not disconnect service. This should allow consumers one year of usage under the program, if utilized as outlined in the agreement. Consumers requesting an iPhone must set up an iTunes account to activate all the applications on the phone. Per Apple and Internet guidelines, children under 13 are not permitted to hold an account, therefore the TAP is prohibiting applicants under 13 from receiving a device that can access the internet. Consumers are limited to 100 minutes per month, 2 G of data and text is unlimited on the ATT devices. Jitterbug is limited to 100 minutes and 300 text messages monthly, but also carries several services such as “Ask a Nurse” for seniors that can be utilized to help organize and maintain daily living and independence.

Purpose of the wireless devices is primarily data driven and should be used for emergency notification to text or make voice or relay calls in emergency situations. We have tried to make it as equitable as possible, learning from other states are doing, and other states are waiting to see how we do with this program so they can possibly duplicate the program offerings. Members were given an opportunity to ask questions about the program and Ms. Moore responded.

Ms. Holloway spoke of the upcoming regulation changes needed; including adding Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) to the list of approved professionals that can sign TAP applications, and changes needed to update the program procedures to incorporate wireless distribution.

TAP will be partnering with Hamilton and ATT to do a press release soon to promote the devices, program and relay services simultaneously. Consumers will be asked to provide testimony on their use of wireless devices during emergency situations and the need for widespread usage of such devices.

Ms. Timon reported about Kentucky Telecommunications Relay Services Advocacy Board, of which attendance is dwindling. She requested that anyone from the voice-impaired, deaf-blind, or deaf and hard of hearing community that wants to participate on this consumer board please contact Jim Stevens with the Public Service Commission (PSC).

Members were asked if there were any other topics for discussion. Seeing none, proposed dates for meetings in 2011 were recommended as April 7th and October 6th and the meeting was adjourned at 3:32 pm.