

Assistive Technology and Communication Committee Meeting Minutes
Doubletree Hotel - Newark
May 8, 2015

Committee Members: Douglas Frank, Lisa Krauss, Linda Kunick, Heather McFarlin, Paula Rabidoux, Jill Radler, Robert Shuemak, Mike Schroeder, Marci Straughter, Kim Stults, Sue Willis, Victor Wilson

Other Council Members: Kellie Brown, Rochelle Hall-Rollins, Lori Kershner, Mark Seifarth

Staff: Fatica Ayers, Carla Cox, Kim Crishbaum, Carolyn Knight, and Paul Jarvis

Guests: Eric Rathburn, Julie Hence/OOD

Introduction

Chair Robert Shuemak called the meeting to order at 10:58 a.m. and introductions were made. A motion was made by Linda K. and seconded by Kim S. for the September 2014 AT Committee meeting minutes. Motion passed.

Assistive Technology (AT) Conference Update

Sue Willis provided an update on the AT Conference (Tech II: Technology Toward Employment) which will be held May 13-14, 2015. Currently there are about 110 people registered (this includes the speakers, workshop presenters, etc.).

Potential Grant Ideas Discussion

Carolyn brought up that through the planning process for the conference, the planning committee discovered many untapped resources, including the people who were a part of the planning group for the conference. The planning group included people from OSU, DODD, AT Ohio, Delaware County Board of DD, and more. Carolyn suggested that this alliance with the planning group continue as the AT Committee looks to the future to decide on grants to fund. Sue added that she had spoken with Bridget Gargan, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB) and Bridget would like OACB to collaborate whenever possible.

Carolyn also spoke about the survey that the AT Conference planning committee conducted early in the planning process. The survey was sent to providers, such as county boards of DD and Centers for Independent Living, and provided a glimpse into what is going on with AT at the provider level. She suggested that the AT Committee consider a more in-depth survey which could be created by a work group or task force. Paula suggested that instead of doing a survey, we could offer a grant project for the development of a searchable database of county resources for the public to access. The results of the database would help to give us better direction of what should be included in a more in-depth survey. Paula mentioned that OCALI may have begun creating one, but wasn't sure of its status.

Julie Hence from OOD said she will suggest to her office that OOD have more involvement, such as surveying counselors to see what training they need in regard to AT for their clients. Kelly acknowledged that county boards need training and continued support, too, in particular the boards located in the rural communities.

Kim S. asked Kelly about the issue of the information technology (IT) structure among the boards and wondered if they had considered regional IT support centers. Eric indicated that all agencies are in the process of centralizing their IT services and downsizing IT personnel.

Carolyn brought the discussion back to the need for a small group or task force for the database rather than a survey. Michael suggested contacting the Brain Injury Advisory Committee and the Department of Veterans Affairs as resources. Fatica suggested that grantees Mike Corbett and Bob Laux be included in the task force since they have an interest in AT as it pertains to community living. Julie from OOD mentioned the LEAN Ohio Project through the Department of Administrative Services. It is a free service where teams are formed and the 6 Sigma approach is used to work through a project. Rochelle indicated that this was used with a new pharmacy process and although it was a tedious process, it was worth the time and commitment.

Committee members agreed that compiling a database of providers, organizations, and services would be the first step to identifying gaps and where these gaps are, as well as forge collaborative efforts with other organizations. Kim C. will work on draft plan language for 2016 for a grant that would address this.

Executive Committee Discussion about AT Committee and Communication

Robert reported that the Executive Committee discussed and recommended a merger of Public Awareness (which is currently under the Executive Committee) with the Assistive Technology Committee. The AT Committee members agreed to this merger.

Public awareness would be referred to as Communication. The committee would be called the Assistive Technology and Communication Committee. Fatica stated since we are in the process of drafting the next five year plan, we will need to include this change in the plan and need to define what we expect from the “communication” portion. She stressed that we look at the total picture when coming up with the mission and goals of this part of the committee. It was asked what Public Awareness currently does, and Carla explained that we have a grantee – Robin Yocum – who is a public relations professional who is involved in the development and design of many of our brochures and other printed products, as well as creating videos. Several suggestions were given for ideas of what “communication” could include in the next state plan, such as:

- Creation of a formal communication plan
- Support outreach efforts to the underserved
- Balancing online vs. printed materials to publicize Council
- Have regional information sessions about Council (coordinate with County Boards)

The group suggested that it would be good if the AT/Communication Committee be made up of two work groups for each topic area. Carolyn asked that Robert choose who would be on each planning group.

A motion was made and passed to adjourn.

ADJOURNED: 12:10 p.m.