

Montco SAAC midyear conversation 4.18.22

Whitney, Susan

Program: Virtual Caregiver Support Group

Since group started, changed name to “caregiver chat” and decided to stay on Zoom (preference of participants, trying to involve them in planning). There have been Covid openings and closings interrupting programs. There have been no caregiver programs for the past 5 years.

Currently 5 families/8 individuals involved. 2 spouses, rest are adult children. Social workers also providing 1-1 support to them. Have not been able to identify peer leaders from within groups. Have thought about increasing diversity through neighboring NAACP and Latinex organizations, but haven't done much. I suggested they consider a “train the trainer” model where they taught people from the communities. Need to do more outreach: churches, day care, 55+ communities, senior centers. Program needs to grow to be sustainable, to be cost-effective for use of social worker time or finding peer leaders. Whitney plans to evaluate options later in the summer. If small, may fold into other programs, if larger will seek grants.

Went on to talk about funding for senior services in PA. Feels that Rob Torres (PA Secty of Aging) doesn't value senior centers. Hopeful about new County Director. Got 1 year extension of funding, next year will be harder. Did own study of pre- and post-MCO models and found people doing much worse since MCO. I also noted that many of our clients sit just above the HCBS eligibility line.

swh