



# Southeast Regional Eldercare Coalition

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## SOUTHEAST REGIONAL ELDERCARE COALITION

### MEETING MINUTES

Friday, November 1, 2024, at 8:30 am

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89966612080?pwd=Y2s1MU16dzdjbFkraFF4ZFZjcXNPQT09>

Meeting ID: 899 6661 2080

Passcode: 471844

**Attendees:** Ann Stepetin, Tess Rouse, Tonya Muldoon, Erin Walker-Tolles, Lena Thompson, Sue Neilsen, Nikki Bass, Tom Sutton, Cameron Young, Jan Tronrud, Dave Ringle, Mary McEwan, Deborah Craig, Sharyl Yeisley, Wendy Anderson, Joan O'Keefe, DJ Kyser, Rita Gray, Jennifer Garrison, Anna Schumacher, Joanna Williams Joseph Biagini, Tyler McNeil, Daniel Schramm, Marty Lange, John Smith III, Donna LaCour, Tommy Jimmie, Brian Holst, Stephanie Duscher, Aria Moore, Royal DeAsis, Martin Bonifaz and Sioux Douglas.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:32AM by Co-Chair Erin Wallker-Tolles.

**Agenda Approval** David Ringle moved to approve the agenda. Sioux Douglas seconded the motion, and it was approved without objections.

**Minutes Approval** The minutes from the September 6, 2024, meeting were tabled until the next meeting.

**Introductions** To welcome new attendees the Chair asked for all present to introduce themselves.

### Project Director Report and New Business

- Tonya Muldoon provided a brief report citing the success of the recent Eldercare Summit and plans for future events in Ketchikan and Sitka.



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- She also discussed ongoing work with the University of Alaska Southeast regarding CNA courses at the Juneau Campus, in particular, effort is underway to have a class ready for Spring '25 semester.
- Tonya is also moving forward with Catholic Community Service on data collection and navigational activities.

## Background Check Delays

Sioux Douglas asked for discussion and recommendations about how background check delays are causing organizations to lose potential employees, thus inhibiting efforts to get eldercare workers which are so badly needed. Delays are up to two months.

- Nikki Bass believes the State should utilize digital fingerprinting and that State officials should be contacted about this.
- Tyler McNeil shared that his agency has improved their background check process, they are conducting their own finger printing, and it is taking about 1-2 weeks to process letters back from the background check unit in 5-10 days. They only have the name provisional and not the full background check. It was noted that they can staff the employee with the name only provisional check approved. They have revamped their hiring process for the employees to have training and orientation while awaiting the full background check.
- Erin Walker-Tolles emphasized the need for a unified approach to advocating for changes. Erin said previous attempts have been made to use private companies.
- Tom Sutton suggests exploring visa programs for out-of-country workers and asking for the State to assist in this effort.
- Martin Bonifaz spoke on behalf of Consumer Direct. They have had challenges with both the background check unit as well as the Medicaid number (MCI#). He explained that the background check can be accomplished within 2 weeks but that they have had to wait up to 4 months for the Medicaid number.

## Advocating for PCA and PCAs Services

- Sharyl Yeisley raised concerns about the availability of PCA and PCAs services as agencies are not providing PCA/PCS services in Ketchikan currently. She notes that the service is not cost effective and is critical for eldercare and IDD populations. She believes there is need for rate increases to attract agencies so they can afford



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to hire PCAs. She emphasized the importance of these services for eldercare and suggests advocating for better rates to support agencies.

- Erin agrees and mentions the SREC's role in identifying challenges and finding solutions. She has deep concerns that Home and Community-based services are down.
- The discussion highlights the need for a coordinated effort to address the gaps in services and advocate for necessary changes. Erin noted that SREC is member of AgeNet and that they will be actively advocating for legislation, particularly during fly-in activities next legislative session. Support from elders by contacting their legislators is also needed.

## Member Comments

- Tyler McNeil highlights the importance of the LTSS survey for rate studies and advocating for livable rates for service providers.
- Martin Bonifaz, Consumer Direct Care Network has volunteered to provide a Best Practice presentation next month. Phone contact 1-888-900-7962.

## Best Practices Presentation

Due to time limitation, the Best Practice presentation was tabled until the next meeting in December. In the meantime, Erin asked that members consider the following questions and come to the next meeting prepared to discuss them:

- -What is working well?
- -What are you proud of?
- -What keeps you up at night?
- -What is your one wish to support eldercare in your community?
- -What is something we don't know about your community?

## Upcoming Events



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- **St. Vincent De Paul Thanksgiving Food Baskets**

Dave Ringle reported that food collections for Thanksgiving have begun and asks for support. Deliveries will be made to people's homes on November 23, 2024. For more information: <https://svdpjuneau.org/event/thanksgiving-food-baskets/>. Volunteers to delivery boxes are needed. Please sign up on-line.

- **Community Resources Connect**

Wednesday November 6, 2024, 10AM-11:30AM

Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall

For more information or RSVP [Community\\_Advocacy@tlingitandhaida.gov](mailto:Community_Advocacy@tlingitandhaida.gov)

Next meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2025, at 11:30AM-1PM

- **NAMI Juneau Virtual Silent Auction November 8-15**



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**LIVE**  **nami** Juneau  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

## Silent Auction

November 8-November 15

Support programs that promote mental health and suicide prevention by bidding on items in our annual virtual silent auction.

**[namijuneau.org/auction](http://namijuneau.org/auction)**

Bid on a wide variety of items including roundtrip tickets for 2 to any Alaska Seaplanes destination!

- Martin Bonifaz from Consumer Direct Care Network has offered to give a Best Practice presentation next month. Phone contact 1-888-900-7962.

### Closing Remarks and Next Steps

- Erin encourages participants to think about the following questions regarding the Eldercare System:



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- What is working well?
- What keeps you up at night?
- What are your wishes for supporting elder care in your communities?

**Next Meeting** December 6, 2024, at 8:30AM

**Adjournment** Co-Chair Erin Waler-Tolles adjourned the meeting at 9:35AM