



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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VDDHH Update March 2017

- In our ongoing efforts to enhance access to healthcare, last quarter, the VDDHH Director and Deputy Director met with representatives of the Medical Society of Virginia (MSV). Initial discussion was focused on the last meeting several months ago on education of the physicians and the introduction of the Communication Access Fund (CAF) concept. MSV staff's research into the issues had found implications concerning liabilities and malpractice. MSV stated they are committed to educating approximately 20,000 licensed and practicing physicians in the COV. They explained that doctors have CEU requirements that fall into two categories, 1) Continuing Medical Education (CME) with accreditation and non-accreditation courses and, 2) Self Study. They cited a new diagnosis code # ICIO which required physicians to take a 2-day boot camp or 16 hours. VDDHH shared some stories concerning communication barriers with physicians, pointed out some considerations regarding the interpreting field and explained the concept of CAF. MSV stated they will continue planning an educational curriculum and a willingness to research further into CAF. VDDHH offered to review and provide feedback on any final draft of the educational curriculum.
- Last January as VDDHH prepared for the winter storms forecasted, VDDHH Interpreter Services compiled a list of sign language interpreters who had previously agreed to be available for emergencies. This list was forwarded to VDEM to ensure that information regarding the impending storm, would be readily available to the deaf and hard of hearing communities via television media, in shelters, and any storm related needs.
- The Statewide Interagency Team (SIT) is planning/hosting a training seminar for the Regional Interagency Teams (RIT) comprised of representatives from the four agencies, like SIT, which serve persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind. Invited to this seminar are the Mental Health Counselors (DBHDS), Regional Counselors for the Deaf (DARS), Outreach Specialists (VDDHH) and DeafBlind Specialists (DBVI). The seminar will be held at the Waynesboro Best Western Conference Center on March 30-31, 2017. RIT meets to coordinate services and share information, ideas and issues, in order to better serve our clients.

- VDDHH, through the Statewide Interagency Team (SIT), is working on an initiative to place videophones in public libraries across the Commonwealth. This project is in keeping with VDDHH's mission of reducing communication barriers, as it will greatly enhance communication access for users of sign language in areas where the required high speed internet access is often unavailable or unaffordable. Last month, SIT met with the two top providers of Video Relay Service (VRS) and both have agreed to take on this pilot project beginning in far Southwest VA, where the expressed need for this service originated. The next step is for the VDDHH Outreach Manager to obtain specific information from the library representative, and then coordinate with the VRS providers who will move forward with the installation of the equipment.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald L. Lanier