**Maryland Commission on Aging**

**MEETING MINUTES | September 12, 2024 • 10 AM – 12 PM**

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Warehouse  
11701 Crain Highway, Cheltenham, MD 20623

**Commission Members Present:**

Rose Maria Li, MBA, PhD (Chair)

Paula Blackwell, MBA, MHA

George Rebok, PhD

David Roth, PhD

**Commission Members Absent:**

John G. Haaga, PhD

Joy Y. Hatchette, Esq.

The Honorable Benjamin F. Kramer

Barry Robert Liden, Esq.

Jay S. Magaziner, PhD, MS Hyg.

Allen Y. Tien, M.D.

Diane L. Ty, MBA

**Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA):**

Secretary Carmel Roques (Non-Voting Representative)

Ian Edwards, PT, DPT, Director, Durable Medical Equipment Re-Use

Barbara Sigler, Communications Director

**Guests:**

Leslie Brown, MD, MPH, CEO & Founder, CNA Simulations

Leslie Flaim, Vice President of The Beacon Institute, LifeSpan Network

Ellie Giles, EdD, CEO & Founder, Virtual Apprentice

Sandy Morse

Derek Smith, PMP, Rose Li and Associates, Inc.

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Dr. Rose Li opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

Given the lack of a quorum (at least 6 members), approval of minutes for two prior meetings (April 24 and June 5) was postponed until the next meeting.

**MDOA Updates:**

Secretary Carmel Roques updated the Commission on four main topic areas:

* MDOA’s collaboration with the National Center to Reframe Aging (NCRA) to counter ageism
  + Ageism creates a systematic barrier to health and wellbeing for older people.
  + About 500 people in the aging sector have received NCRA training thus far, with plans to continue engaging local communities in the conversation.
* MDOA’s work on Longevity Ready Maryland (LRM)
  + LRM is a planning tool to take care of older adults today and prepare for older adults tomorrow.
  + LRM will help MDOA achieve its vision that all older adults lead lives that are healthy, financially secure, socially connected, and purposeful.
  + After Gov. Moore approves the LRM plan, the next step is to turn the recommendations into policies and legislation with funding for services and programs.
* Modernizing Senior Care Program
  + Advancing States is working with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) to find ways to better meet the needs of people who do not qualify for Medicaid but still need assistance.
  + Senior Care, Congregate Housing, and the Senior Assisted Living Subsidy programs need to be modernized.
  + MDOA is working on how to update these programs and will report on this at the next CoA meeting.
* Healthcare Workforce Concerns
  + Maryland’s workforce shortage follows a national trend.
  + The workforce has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.
  + Rural areas face the brunt of shortages.
  + RNs have the most active job postings of any occupation in the state (5,052 openings in MD).
  + Nurse Practitioners have the highest growth rate of 43%.
  + We can expect 31,283 additional jobs in healthcare over the next 10 years.
  + Students graduate and leave the state.
  + Sec. Roques sits on the Governor’s Workforce Development Board and MDOA is actively participating in two subcommittees.
  + Maryland is challenged with closing the healthcare workforce shortage gap.

**Discussion**

* In response to a question about the Commission’s role in shaping the LRM, Sec. Roques indicated that the LRM plan will come to the Commission for review. Work groups are meeting now to develop recommendations, objectives, and strategies.
* Other related comments:
  + We see an investment in technology, but not always healthcare-related.
  + Robotics can bridge the gap between a live nurse and other needs.

**Innovations for Aging: Concurrent demonstrations of technology development**

Attendees heard from two local innovators about their technology-driven innovations that benefit older adults.

**Dr. Leslie Brown, CEO & Founder, CNA Simulations – platform to support CNAs in their training**

During pandemic, there was a CNA shortage, the online hybrid programs did not fully train the students, and there was a high turnover rate. Dr. Brown described how CNA Simulations can help prepare students for real-life situations. The company hopes to expand their simulations to skilled nursing facilities to help train more CNAs. Commission members participated in CNA Simulations.

**Dr. Giles, CEO & Founder, Virtual Apprentice ReTreatVR, to support senior wellness and social engagement**

Dr. Giles described how virtual reality can be used as a tool to enhance workforce development, reduce loneliness and isolation. Commission members experienced demonstrations and were able to travel to a number of locales with a virtual tour guide.

**Adjournment**

**Tour of DME Warehouse**

Commissioners were invited to tour the Maryland Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Re-Use warehouse and learned about the DME program from Ian Edwards, DME Director.