



UPPING OUR GAME: TRANSFORMING APS THROUGH STATE ADVOCACY COALITIONS

NAPSA Annual Conference
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Presenters

- **Iris C. Freeman**

- Founding Board Chair, Minnesota Elder Justice Center; Adjunct Faculty, Mitchell Hamline School of Law

- **Lisa Nerenberg**

- Executive Director, California Elder Justice Coalition

◆ **With participating coalition leaders**

State elder justice coalitions defined

A state (or tribal) elder justice (or elder abuse) coalition is an ongoing multidisciplinary state- (or tribal-) level collaborative with defined membership that is dedicated to identifying and addressing gaps or inadequacies in policy and practice related to elder abuse detection, prevention, and intervention. Besides coalitions, they may be called networks, councils, commissions, associations, partnerships, and task forces.

National Network of State Elder Justice Coalitions

- California Elder Justice Coalition
- Coalition for Elder Justice in Connecticut
- Georgia Statewide Elder Justice Initiative
- Indiana Council Against Senior Exploitation
- Maine Council for Elder Abuse Prevention
- Michigan Elder Justice Coordinating Council
- Minnesota Elder Justice Center
- Montana Elder Justice Coalition
- New York State Coalition on Elder Abuse
- North Carolina Partnership to Address Elder Abuse
- Ohio Coalition for Adult Protective Services and Ohio Elder Abuse Commission

How state advocacy coalitions benefit APS programs

- Supporting local MDTs and collaboration
- Mentoring, training and leadership development
- Research, needs assessment and planning
- Advocacy to strengthen state policies
- COVID-19 related

Support local MDTs and collaboration

- MT set up FASTs, tracks results using computer software, reports to governor
- NY disseminated RFPs to select regional hub organizations to sponsor new Enhanced MDTs and provide technical assistance
- CA worked with state VOCA administrators to develop county MDTs, all of which include victim advocates and APS

Mentoring, training and leadership development

- Multiple states hold conferences, trainings, summits, webinars; produce newsletters, blueprints with APS
- CA partnered with a Cal State/LA economics class to map APS and other service disparities
- MN produced manual to help residential care workers spot and respond to financial exploitation by families and other trusted persons, with specific information about how to work with APS

Research, needs assessment, planning

- Coalitions create opportunities for stakeholders, including APS, to develop research agendas that inform practice and policy.
- NY helped identify need for incidence data, secured funds, & disseminated results
- Ohio Elder Abuse Commission has hosted symposia on research needs and has a standing Research Committee. It conducts stakeholder surveys on research priorities.

Advocacy to strengthen state policies

- Maine promoted the Governor's Executive Order for a State Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership to adopt a Roadmap for their systems
- Ohio Elder Abuse Commission was codified in state law, along with APS interdisciplinary teams and expanded mandated reporting; Ohio Coalition of Adult Protective Services led efforts that resulted in increased state funding for APS, serving to strengthen county-administered APS programming statewide.
- NC has produced APS case scenarios from counties to be used in advocacy for increased funding by illustrating the depth and breadth of elder maltreatment for state lawmakers

Advocacy to strengthen state policies

- CA co-sponsored a bill creating an APS operated eviction-prevention pilot project
- CA helped secure state APS Liaison to facilitate coordination among counties, state agencies, and national entities
- CA advocated for increased funds for training, including cross training with public guardians

Advocacy to strengthen state policies

- MN has been addressing financial exploitation for over a decade:
 - Streamlined process for APS and prosecutors to obtain documents from financial institutions
 - Expanded the definition of financial exploitation in the criminal code
 - Amended penalty levels – imprisonment and fines
 - Extended statutes of limitations – longer look-back to bring cases
 - Established that aggregation (sum) of amounts taken over a six months may be charged as a single case and charged accordingly
 - Expanded venue options to give prosecutors options in where to bring a case (in county where alleged crime was committed or where victim resides)

Advocacy to strengthen state policies

- MN's 2009 work authorized the effort to create a single point of entry for APS reports which opened in 2015
- MN's coalition members contribute to broader efforts, e.g.
 - 2019 reform legislation included new state funding for APS and long-term care ombudsmen throughout the state
 - 2019 legislation to reform guardianship and promote less restrictive options, including Supported Decision-making
 - Continuing efforts to license Assisted Living settings and spell out consumer protections against involuntary evictions
 - Continuing efforts to update APS practices, with a focus on the definitions (obligations) of caregiver and self-neglect

COVID-19 related

- Ohio Coalition of Adult Protective Services tracks COVID-related service trends. Help-line calls increased 16% as APS calls decreased. Offers expertise on outbreaks/re-opening in congregate living facilities
- Maine developed brief videos and PowerPoint on COVID-19
- NY distributes COVID-19 resources via website, news bulletin, emails w/focus on scams, census, relief payments. They spotlighted a new local “Virtual Coalition” in Orange County that was created in response to the shutdown and offers podcasts and a website.

Ask Coalition Leaders

Besides the presenters, representatives of several state advocacy coalitions are here to fill in some details of their work to support and transform APS in their states.

About the photo: From the archives, MN APS leaders and other key stakeholders celebrate then-Governor's signing Vulnerable Adult Act reforms in 2009.



NATIONAL NETWORK OF STATE ELDER JUSTICE COALITIONS

A Voluntary Network of Active Colleagues Addressing Elder Justice
Through Collaboration

Building a national elder justice movement state by state

- As the response to elder mistreatment gathers force and momentum, especially in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, ASA and The John A. Hartford Foundation offered free access to “[Taking Action Against Elder Mistreatment](#).”
- Profiles of the California, Minnesota, New York, and Ohio programs begin on page 111 of this issue, in the article, “Building a National Elder Justice Movement State by State.”

Do you have a state elder justice coalition we haven't identified?

- Are you in the process of starting one? Or thinking about starting one?
- If so, you're invited to contact us at nnsejc@gmail.com and include:
 - The name and address of the state coalition
 - Contact person
 - Coalition website, if applicable
 - Name of designated representative(s) to NNSEJC, and contact information Designated representatives will receive periodic communications.

State elder justice coalition members

- Have access to quarterly free 90-minute videoconference meetings
- Unique networking opportunities with state elder justice coalitions from across the nation
- Opportunities to talk with coalition leaders across the spectrum from well-established to just getting started
- Agendas feature a “state coalition in focus,” a public policy update and presentation, coalition updates and updates from member coalitions.

Presenter contact information

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Discussion

