## Charter for the MnCHOICES Mentors Alliance

**Background**
Mentors play a key role as we maintain operations of the MnCHOICES Assessment and prepare to launch the MnCHOICES Support Plan. Mentors are considered to be the MnCHOICES expert within each lead and delegate agency and the communication liaison between their agency and DHS. Mentors need a vehicle that allows them to continue to grow in their knowledge about MnCHOICES, build relationships with other Mentors throughout the state and have direct access to members of the DHS MnCHOICES Project Team. The MnCHOICES Mentors Alliance provides a vehicle to accomplish this.

**Purpose**
Through regular contact with Mentors we plan to:
- Share current updates and future plans
- Provide ongoing training and support to Mentors to increase their skills and knowledge related to MnCHOICES
- Develop strong working relationships between MnCHOICES Mentors and DHS
- Offer a direct line of communication between Mentors and DHS
- Identify best practices and practical strategies to support Mentors with the implementation and ongoing use of MnCHOICES
- Promote a train the trainer approach to nurture successful users

**Structure**
The Alliance consists of:
- All Mentors identified within lead agencies and their delegates
- Assigned DHS staff
- Invited subject matter experts (SMEs) from DHS as needed
- Invited external SMEs as needed

The Alliance will meet in a designated location on a scheduled basis as decided by the Alliance but no less than once per year. We anticipate the Alliance will meet approximately two weeks prior to each version release of MnCHOICES which occurs quarterly.

**Scope**
Representing themselves and their agency, Mentors will identify how DHS can best support them in their role as a MnCHOICES Mentor with the following functions:
- Communication
- Training
- Supporting MnCHOICES users in their agency
- Troubleshooting MnCHOICES policy, technology and training issues

**Boundaries**
There are certain parameters that influence DHS’s ability to revise elements about or related to MnCHOICES. Some of them are:
- Federal regulation and state statute regarding assessment and support planning for people who need or perceive a need for long-term services and supports
- Available resources within DHS
- Competing priorities of the legislature and DHS administration

**Membership**
- All MnCHOICES Mentors as identified by lead agencies and delegate agencies
- DHS MnCHOICES key staff
| Roles | • **Mentors:** Prepare for and participate in scheduled meetings. Collect, analyze and share information about their agency’s operation. Share their personal successful strategies with other members that will help improve the efficiency and skill of users. Contribute to promoting consistency across agencies statewide. Alert DHS on training and technical assistance needs of mentors and users. Recommend agenda items for meetings. Communicate between their agency and DHS. (Mentors are identified by each lead and delegate agency)  
• **DHS Key Staff:** Schedule, prepare for, facilitate and participate in meetings. Develop agendas based on new releases of MnCHOICES and identified needs of Mentors including training, strategies, communications, tools and resources. Assist to locate subject matter experts as needed. Document key outcomes from meetings. (DHS key staff who must be in attendance: Facilitator, at least one consistent representative from Aging & Adult Services, Disability Services and SSIS/MnCHOICES Help Desk.)  
• **DHS Facilitator:** Sets agenda, makes arrangements for space and equipment, sends notifications, solicits SMEs based on agenda and guides Mentor meetings according to agenda. (DHS Facilitator will be the MnCHOICES Training Lead)  
• **Internal and External Subject Matter Experts:** Provide adequate information on designated topics to empower Mentors to successfully support users in their agency. (TBD based on agenda)  
• **Guests:** Invited representatives from agencies based on agenda topics or specific needs of each agency  
• **Sponsors:** Provide authority and advice as needed (Alex Bartolic, Kari Benson, Katherine Finlayson and Rachel A. Shands) |
| Authority | The Mentors Alliance is a professional body of individuals who have practical day to day knowledge about MnCHOICES. Their input is valuable and important and they may provide recommendations as they determine appropriate. Division directors at DHS make final decisions. The MMA does have some decision making authority regarding its own structure, purpose, roles, timeline, expected outcomes and membership. |
| Timeline | • The MnCHOICES Mentors Alliance is an ongoing group.  
• The group will help decide the frequency, location and types of meetings within the resources available within DHS  
• The group will begin to meet in February of 2015 on a scheduled basis  
• The Charter will be reviewed and revised annually. |
| Expected Outcomes | We expect members will:  
• Build strong working relationships with their colleagues, the MnCHOICES Project Team and other DHS staff  
• Expand their knowledge about the purpose and use of MnCHOICES  
• Mature in their role as a MnCHOICES Mentor  
• Become proficient with common technical issues and troubleshooting techniques  
• Confidently access and use MnCHOICES  
• Understand how to train and orient users in their agencies  
• Locate resources when they need them  
• Promote the vision and values of MnCHOICES |