

## **DDS Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council (ASDAC)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**June 22, 2016**

**Members Present:** Deputy Commissioner Scheff, Judy Dowd, Doriana Vicedomini, Ann Gionet, Sara Lourie, Jim Loomis, Beth Leslie, Zachary Laudano, Ruth Eren, Lynn Ricci, HSC Ricci, Lois Rosenwald, Marcia Eckerd, John Pelegano, Kate McEvoy (sitting in for Bill Halsey)

**Members Absent:** Kathy Marchione, Bill Halsey, Carol Ryan-Hanlon, Nikki Richer, Yana Razumnaya, John Molteni, Robert Shea, Isabella Rodriguez, Representative Abercrombie, Isabelina Rodriguez

**Call to Order:** 10:02am

**Welcome and Introduction by DDS Deputy Commissioner Scheff:**

**No Public Comment**

**Beacon Health updated the council on the implementation of the autism mandate under Medicaid.**

There have been efforts to recruit additional providers through new service classes, attendance at the Mass ABA conference, outreach to providers on the state border, attendance at network event, university colleges, and efforts to link students with agencies. They intend to hold learning collaboratives each month and offer trainings

Some changes to coverage include coverage of program book development, direct observations, separate authorization, social skills and parent groups authorization, taking over qualification process, putting together organization

The rates have been redesigned to attract more providers and an updated provider bulletin will go out once they have been approved by CMS.

There was also discussion about the efforts to attract new providers. Beacon Health reported that they had had inquiries from Birth to Three providers about the enrollment process.

**The Council received presentations on the feasibility initiatives:**

**The Center for Children with Special Needs presented on the *Subacute Multidisciplinary Treatment Team to Support Children and Adolescents with ASD in Crisis*.**

The Center explained that the initiative is a partnership between them and the Departments of Developmental Services and Children and Families and that it is designed to serve the special needs of children and adolescents with an autism spectrum disorder, or a dual diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and psychiatric disorder

They presented on things that have been accomplished to date. Most importantly, the team members have all been hired and trained and they are developing caregiver criteria

It was pointed out that this service is different from others because of the intensity of training, the ability to measure outcomes, development of prevention measures and integration of knowledge of autism with individuals with trauma

**The ASRC presented on the “Power of Mentoring” initiative.**

There was further discussion about how to distribute the video and advertise the program more widely.

**Next came an update on the Advocate Support project in Suffield and Region 17**

The initiative focused on collaboration of home and community. It uses a combination of school-based and community-based supports. Staff go in and meet with the families personally, develop plans for chores, hygiene and have weekly meetings with parents with students.

She said they are looking to add 7 more children by reaching out to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders

**Lastly, Lynn Ricci gave an update on the inpatient specialized beds at the Hospital for Special Care.**

Currently, 6 patients on the unit. Length of stay is projected for 45 days.

There have been challenges around discharge because of the inability to connect with community. There is a lack of housing options and difficulty connecting to school supports. They have worked to engage the families. Psychologist on unit spends a lot of time training the families, modeling the behaviors. They developed a matrix for success. The goal is to maintain treatments goals in community – do not have the data yet to show if this is happening.

**There was a lengthy discussion about the transition of autism services from DDS to DSS.**

Discussion included how to get information about changes and available services to clients and families. It was also suggested that school districts be notified. Connecticut’s Medicaid Director, Kate McEvoy who heads up the division at DSS where autism services will be located, discussed the development of protocols and staff. She said there are plans to hire a new manager and discussed the difficulties of physically moving staff to DSS.

There was also a discussion about adding additional members with families to the council.

The bylaws were reviewed and potential changes were discussed. There was a motion to accept technical changes.

Deputy Commissioner Scheff expressed his appreciation and acknowledgment to Debra Anderson as she will be retiring state service June 30, 2016.

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion accepted.

**Motion to adjourn:** Ann Gionet, seconded by Dorian Vicedomini

**Adjournment:** 12:03pm

Next meeting is **Wednesday, 2016**  
10:00am-12:00pm  
Legislative Office Building  
Room 2A