

**DSS Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council (ASDAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**July 15, 2020**

**Members Present:** Jennifer Abbatemarco, Representative Catherine Abercrombie, Judy Dowd, Marcia Eckerd, Ann Gionet, Bill Halsey, Bryan Klimkiewicz, Julie McKenna, representing Mickey Kramer, Andrew Komarow, Jim Loomis, Kathy Marchione, Aileen McKenna, Jimnahs Miller, Donyale Pina, Yana Razumnaya, Lynn Ricci, Lois Rosenwald, Carole Ryan-Hanlon, Kari Sassu, Doriana Vicedomini, Julie Wolf

**Members Absent:** Jill Caron, Melissa Gagne, Mickey Kramer, DDS designee, Disability Rights of Connecticut/designee,

**Others:** Amy Dumont, Jennifer Krom

**Call to Order:** 10:00am

**Welcome and Introduction by Bill Halsey and Yana Razumnaya**

**Public Comments:** Monica discussed social and emotional concerns of individuals and suggested peer groups

**Continued discussion on how the pandemic is impacting individuals with ASD and their Families**

- A great deal of work ahead of us
- Social stories and supports for individuals regarding returning to school suggested
- Rights need to be considered
- Challenges of isolation and social communication is important and anxiety has increased
- Concern for sanity of parents
- Masks are a concern
- Many questions for Bryan Klimkiewicz, Department of Education regarding students returning to school
- Least restricted environment is one of the top priorities
- Ensuring safety
- Bryan will provide links to updates, and comprehensive document once approved
- Fall Reopening document is a very important framework for students returning to school
- Helping teachers organize structures to develop lessons for students

- Plan to continue to provide guidance
- Concerns regarding students aging out, transition to adulthood
- Discussion of extending programs and compensatory educational sources due to pandemic
- Bryan is collecting plans from school districts and will share survey with Council

### **Discussion on telemedicine and telephone services for individuals with ASD**

- Bill Halsey interested to hear thoughts from Council
- Hospital for Special Care has been successful using telehealth in clinic
- Coding issue for telephone only
- Many agencies are not meeting in person due to risks
- Providers' comfort levels makes difference in resources currently available, being provided on an individual basis
- Vast majority of autism services can be delivered via telemedicine
- No show rate is very low
- Amy Dumont shared results with individuals on the Autism Waiver and is happy with services provided
- Discussion regarding the struggle of individuals on the waitlist. Amy suggested families contact our Resource Specialists for support
- Jennifer Krom provided update from Beacon
- Beacon providers are practicing thorough job regarding appropriateness of telemedicine based on providers meeting with individuals
- Increase in Beacon providers and waitlist is moving faster
- 2500 individuals receiving direct service delivery
- Decrease in ER visits
- BCBAs feel parents are doing a great job taking on a successful role
- Assisted technology is an important topic. Ad hoc technology work group will be developed to further discuss this need
- Lynn Ricci provided Hospital for Special Care update – Unit is full, quieter in April, some challenging discharges regarding transition to home, building project is ahead of schedule and hope to open November 1, 2020

### **ASD Lifespan Waiver Update by Amy Dumont**

- Currently 1692 individuals on the autism waitlist
- Working on filling vacancies
- Successfully working remotely providing virtual and in-home supports

**Discussion:**

- Social groups are a high risk right now
- Suggestions to develop individuals social circles with small groups of friend for socializing, meeting outdoors

**To Do:**

- Bill Halsey will touch base with Bryan Klimkiewicz
- Ad hoc Assisted Technology workgroup
- Bill will provide funding and proposal update

**Adjournment:** 12:03pm

Next Meeting: **Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 10:00am**