

DSS Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council (ASDAC)
Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2021
(Virtual Meeting)

Members Present: Jennifer Abbatemarco, Representative Abercrombie, Jill Caron, Shelly Maynes for Judy Dowd, Amy Dumont, Marcia Eckerd, Melissa Gagne, Ann Gionet, Bill Halsey, Dori Papa for Bryan Klimkiewicz, Mickey Kramer, Andrew Komarow, Jim Loomis, Kathy Marchione, Jimnahs Miller, Donyale Pina, Yana Razumnaya, Lynn Ricci, Alice Ridgway, Lois Rosenwald, Carole Ryan-Hanlon, Kari Sassu, Doriana Vicedomini, Julie Wolf

Members Absent: Jill Caron, Marcia Eckerd, Representative from DDS

Others: Michael Powers, Seth Powers, Courtney Cotter (CCSN), Jennifer Krom (Beacon Health Options)

Call to Order: 10:04am

Welcome and Roll Call

Review and Approval of November 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes- Motion to approve by Lynn Ricci and seconded by Andrew Komarow

Presentation by Dr. Powers, Seth Powers and Courtney Cotter, CCSN regarding Public School responses to the challenges of COVID restrictions, the effect on learning, and recommendations for practice as we move into 2021 (see attached presentation)

- A model response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- CCSN's Consultative Role Prior to Closure
- Spring 2021: State-Mandated School Closure
 - Synchronous Learning
 - Asynchronous Learning
 - Parent Training
- Consultation Provided During Spring 2021 Closure
 - Maintenance of Multidisciplinary Teaming
 - Support and Structure of Instruction
 - Support to the educational team emphasized identification of appropriate targets
 - Support to families/home teams emphasized training and information sharing

- Parent Involvement
 - Professional Development and Staff Training
 - Administrative Involvement
- Challenges Experienced During Distance Instruction and Solutions
- Language barriers for families who have a primary language other than English
- Confidentiality during small group instruction
- Parents unavailable to support student directly during teaching due to family variables such as caregiver availability, language barriers, competing sibling instructional schedules, or work schedules
- Parent lack of understanding teaching programs
- Family/caregiver difficulty establishing themselves as instructors within the home due to the student's learning history with parents
- Student's interfering behavior and/or demand avoidant behavior
- Return to Live Instruction
- Models for Extended school Year Services (ESY)
 - Remote Only
 - Live Related Services/Remote Academic Instruction
 - Live Instruction/Supplemental Remote Learning
- Models for 2020-2021 School Year Services (Fall Opening)
 - Full-Time On-Site/Cohorted Access to General Education
 - Full-Time On-Site/Full Access to General Education
 - Full-Time On-Site/Remote Access to General Education
- General Findings Upon Return to Live Instruction
- Student Performance Data
- Case Study
- Recommendations
 - Participation in Full-Time Instruction, Even During Hybrid Models
 - Development of Essential Skills While Onsite
 - Sustained attention to instruction (both virtual and live) in the absence of physical redirection or with proctoring
 - Responding to embedded and visual prompts as opposed to physical prompting or adult prompting
 - Developing skills sets related to using technology
 - Understanding spoken and written directions given through technology rather than being delivered in person by a teacher or paraprofessional
 - Increasing Parent Training

- Familiarity with implementation of teaching programs, instructional strategies and elements, reinforcement and prompting procedures, and correction strategies
 - Competence with data collection procedures so that families can work in collaboration with certified and noncertified school team members to assess student progress
 - Training via didactic training and in-vivo coaching and feedback regarding the implementation of positive behavior supports in increase student engagement during and participation in remote learning
- Documenting Strategies that Were Effective During the Initial Closure
 - Social Distancing Considerations
 - Desensitization to the Use of PPE
 - Careful Consideration of Teachers Supporting Students Onsite and Virtually
 - Movement of Program Books to Electronic Platforms

State Plan Update by Jennifer Krom: (see attached presentation)

- State Plan Services for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Diagnosis – January Update
- ASD Medicaid Open Authorizations as of 1/1/2021
- ASD Medicaid Open Authorizations
- ASD Medicaid Youth Demographics
- ASD Provider Enrollment as of 1/1/2021 – Total of 548 Providers
- Telehealth role in increase in providers, more flexibility
- Timeframe/Wait-times between referrals received and services being received depends on the child’s need and location within the state. Usually between 2-3 weeks, some between 3-6 months
- ASD Care Coordination and Peer Specialist Activity
- Internal spreadsheet being kept by Beacon
- Continue to reach out to families that have all services on hold due to COVID-19
- Question regarding Emergency Room numbers – Many parents are less like to bring their children to the ER due to fear of COVID-19
- Bill suggested contacting hospital? for their input on this
- Lynn Ricci stated they are seeing many parents aren’t comfortable coming in due to COVID-19
- Jennifer stated they have dedicated peer coordinator on staff that assist with hospitalizations

- Mickey Kramer – pay attention to what we learn from family, child and provider. Spell out what we should be doing in terms of early identification, supports, etc. What are we going to do about it? Worry for families that have concluded that they cannot parent their children

DSS Transition on Council:

- Amy Dumont will replace Bill's role on the Council

Other Business:

- Housing Sub-Committee meeting is scheduled for 1/26/2021
- Yana questioned what stage Autism Individuals would be put in for the vaccine and Bill will follow-up.
- Representative Abercrombie mentioned there are many discussions going on at this time. Concerned about the need for individuals in congregate care.
- Amy Dumont and Dawn Lambert meet weekly with DPH and will get further guidance on populations that the vaccine will be rolled out to in the coming phase. More information will be shared when available
- Yana suggested the need for a mentoring program
- Alice Ridgway offered to do presentation for Birth to 3

To Do:

- Follow up on COVID-19 vaccine

Adjournment: 11:55am

Next Meeting: **Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 10:00am**