

**DSS Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council (ASDAC)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**March 15, 2023**

**(Virtual Meeting)**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83444846579?pwd=cy96dndWOFE1aFBwY3BPM01VcE54UT09>

**Members Present: Jennifer Abbatemarco, Representative Tammy Exum, Stephen Byers, Judy Dowd, Amy Dumont, Marcia Eckerd, Melissa Gagne, Ann Gionet, Koleen Kerski, Andrew Komarow, Julie McKenna, Kathy Marchione, Julie McKenna, Jimnahs Miller, Donyale Pina, Yana Razumnaya, Lynn Ricci, Lois Rosenwald, Carol Ryan - Hanlon, Kari Sassu, Sarah Schlegel, Doriana Vicedomini, Julie Wolf**

**Members Absent: Bryan Klimkiewicz, Jim Loomis, Krista Ostaszewski**

**Others: Jennifer Krom**

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

**Welcome and Roll Call**

**Approval of 1/18/2023 Meeting Minutes: Motion to accept by Jimnahs Miller and seconded by Carole Ryan-Hanlon. Minutes accepted.**

**No Public Comments**

**Supportive Housing**

**Housing Sub-Committee**

- No updates currently. Will regroup before the next meeting.

**Beacon Health Options update by Jennifer Krom (see attached presentation)**

- As of March 1, 2023, Beacon has been changed to Carelon
- ASD Medicaid Authorizations as of 03/01/2023
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- Annual (YTD Admits/Authorizations for ASD Services by Serve Class
- ASD Medicaid Youth Monthly Admissions as of 03-01-2023 Report
- ASD Medicaid Youth Demographics as of 03/02/2023
- ASD Provider Enrollment as of 03/02/2023

- ASD Care Coordination and Peer Specialist Activity
- Actively working with Data Team on an interactive map and will be providing Provider training once released

**Autism Waiver Update by Amy Dumont:**

- Waiting list of 2005 individuals: 2 over the age of 65, 12 between ages 18 and 65, 18 and under. 172 individuals currently being served on the waiver
- Average caseload per Case Manager is 37
- HR recently approved 1 more Case Manager
- 15 individuals declined slots, 4 refused, 2 moved out of state, 4 chose other waived programs and 5 were unable to locate
- 4 new Providers were approved and currently within enrollment process with Gainwell
- Plan to move 200 from the waitlist. Difficult to specify the timeframe as the process takes time due to financial eligibility
- Individuals must utilize at least 1 waived service to stay active on the waiver
- Amy suggested inviting Paul Chase to an ASDAC meeting to explain the financial eligibility process
- Ideal Case Manager numbers are cap of 40 individuals at
- Lynn Ricci suggested tracking metrics such as: prior spots, new spots, total, assigned, assigned – no provider available, receiving services, offered declined, assigned but choosing not to engage at this time
- Yana Razumnaya suggested an emergency plan for individuals on the waiver. Unfortunately, this is not a waived service

**Center of Excellence Update:**

- Jennifer Cavallaro continues to work on the RFQ. It is currently in the Contracts Unit

**Governor's Autism Proposal Presentation by Judy Dowd and Claudio Gualteri (See attached)**

Lead agency responsibility transfers from Department of Social Services (DSS) to Office of Policy and Management's (OPM) Health and Human Services Policy and Planning Division in order to:

- Better coordinate autism services across a fragmented system where several state agencies and school districts either directly provide or oversee services for individuals on the autism spectrum

- Allow a more holistic review of autism services to identify gaps in the service continuum and work to improve cross-agency coordination going forward
- HB 6665 – An Act Concerning Recommendations for Health and Human Services implements the changes
- Section 1(a) designates OPM as the lead agency to coordinate with state agencies that have responsibility for providing services to persons diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder
- Section 1(b) outlines areas of focus for OPM including:
  - Early intervention services for any child under the age of three
  - Education, recreation, habilitation, vocational, transition services for individuals aged three to twenty-one
  - Services for adults over the age of twenty-one
  - Housing assistance
  - Services that address the intersection of autism services and the criminal justice system
  - Coverage of autism services under commercial insurance and by other payors
  - Workforce training specific to autism spectrum disorder; and
  - Other services deemed necessary by the Secretary of OPM
- Section 1(d) requires OPM to make recommendations to the Governor and committees of cognizance concerning legislation and funding required to provide necessary services to persons diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder
- Section 1 (e) requires OPM to research and locate possible funding streams for the continued development and implementation of services for persons diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder
- Section 2 – Autism Council Membership and responsibilities remain unchanged. Changes include:
- Section 2(c) which moves the council under OPM for administrative purposes
  - Funding provided in the Governor’s budget for dedicate FTE to organize the council and ensure there is meaningful engagement into policy development across the spectrum of service needs
- Section 2(e) which moves the entity the council advises from the Commissioner of Social Services to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management consistent with the proposed change in lead agency status
- Section 3 confirms that the Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services in the Department of Social Services will continue to oversee the operation of Medicaid state plan services and the autism waiver
- Sections 13 -17 are technical fixes
- Thoughts and Questions

- Received positive support from the Council.
- Link to Bill and Fact sheet will be sent to the ASDAC.

### **Quality and Outcome Data Collection**

- Jennifer Krom mentioned they are working on it

### **New Business:**

- Jim Loomis has resigned from the Council.
- Dr. Powers has expressed interest in applying for this position.
- Melissa Hoon is also interested in open position on the Council
- Autism Awareness Event being held Friday, April 28, 2023, in the North Lobby of the Capitol from 10:00am – 2:00pm
- Addressing Nutrition
- Discussion of holding a meeting for further discussion of the Governor's Proposal

### **To Do:**

**Adjournment: 12:03**

Next Meeting: May 17, 2023