

Medicaid Long Term Services and Supports Rebalancing Initiatives Steering Committee

Friday, December 8, 2023

10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Virtual Meeting

Meeting Summary

Members Present: Mary Ann Langton, Mairead Painter, Bonnie Meyers, Bill Halsey, Elaine Kolb, Krista Ostaszewski, Anna Doroghazi, Melissa Morton, Jennifer Switalski, Laura Snow Robinson, Cathy Ludlum, Karyl Lee Hall, Maggie Ewald, Susan Raimondo, Kevin Brophy, Amy Dumont, Tom Fiorentino, Erin Leavitt-Smith

Members Excused: None

Members Absent: Kelley Kendall, Michele Jordan

Members of the Public: Lauren Carabetta, Greg Bennett, Melissa Augeri, Vanessa O'Neal-Campbell, Colleen Hudson, Hye-Yeon Ryu Kim, Julie Robison, Jessica Hughes, Heather Ferguson-Hull, Pooja Modi, Turquoise Percy, Guerda Sainval, Martha Porter, Paul Ford, Cynthia Cartier, Tasha Erskine, Mike Peccerilli, Sylvia Crespo, Saraid Garcia, Holly Carmichael, Julia Fishman, Michael Werner, Karri Filek, Christine Cianciola, Jay Katz, Chris Washington, Rachel Neff, Gladys Diaz, Janette Steward, Cindy Majersky, Jeanette Burney, Jessica Ludorf, Andrei Brel, Karen Anderson, Megan Baker, Matt Barrett, Cole Cooper, Barbara Cass, Winsome Harvey, Lindsay Jesshop, Mag Morelli, Deborah Migneault, Toni Ortega, Claire Volain, Tracy Wodatch, Theresa Brown, Jose Rose, Sasha-Gaye Binnie, Jose Michael Gonzalez.

1. The meeting was called to order by Mairead, Co-Chair at 10:30.
2. Mairead made a motion to approve the October minutes. Cathy moved the October minutes, Erin seconded. October minutes were approved. Elaine abstained and asked that minutes and agenda be sent to her in the mail.

Mairead made a motion to approve the November minutes. Cathy Ludlum pointed out that "O'Donnell Group" should be put in the blank space in these minutes. Mairead made a motion to approve November minutes with changes. Erin moved and Anna seconded. November minutes were approved with recommended changes. Elaine, Kevin, and Maggie abstained.

3. MFP Report Out – Lauren Carabetta
 - January to November 1,626 MFP appls were received.
 - Working on outreach to make sure facility staff are aware of MFP.
 - Between January and November 2023, 438 people transitioned.
 - In November 2023, 45 people transitioned.
 - Between January and November 2022, 395 were transitioned.
 - Last week MFP hosted another all staff retreat where training and team building was provided to staff.
4. Unfinished Business

FI Update – Bill Halsey

- Continuing to move forward with full transition to GT Independence
- Embarking on a pilot group of members that volunteered to transfer to GTI in early December. New enrollees will be starting in December also.
- Bill said No feedback has been received yet.
- Holly Carmichael shared that she is hearing positive things from case managers. Once pilot group is enrolled, she thinks there will be good feedback from those people as well. Their start date will be December 24th so that their first pay period would start in the new year.

Waiver Waitlist – Amy Dumont

- Technical definition of waiver – HCBS waiver allows CT to receive 50% reimbursement, through Medicaid, from federal govt for enabling individuals to leave institutional settings or prevent placement in them. Waivers allow states to waive certain federal requirements within the Medicaid program. They have cost caps and limits of people served.
- ABI II – 249 active cases, 14 pending, 93 waiting, 43 pending eval, 30 available slots. DSS reserves slots on this waiver for DMHAS programs. There is no waiting list for these.
- ABI I – 289 active cases
- MH Waiver – 508 active cases, 22 waiting, 66 available slots.
- Autism Waiver – 195 active cases, 125 pending, 2,047 waiting. 10 yr. waiting period. Hiring 3 new staff and taking 120 clients off waiting list in 2024. Hiring 5 more staff in 2025 to take 200 more clients off waiting list by 2026.
- PCA Waiver – 1,094 active cases, 42 pending, 1,196 waiting.
- Katie Beckett – 322 active cases, 14 pending, 299 waiting.
- CHCPE – 16,267 active cases. No waitlist.
- Category 4 Elder – 74 active cases, 6 pending. No waitlist.
- Questions
 - Karyl Lee believes that when there is a 3-year waiting list with a thousand people long, it's a program failure. The problems need to be fixed.
 - Bonnie mentioned the long wait time for neuro-psych evals. She asked if DSS would consider looking at alternative evals or assessments to confirm brain injury.
 - Anna mentioned that the Appropriations & Human Services Committee have a hearing on 12/13/23 at 11:00 on DDS and DSS waiver plans. There are state plan amendments for CFC and CHCPE. Can someone speak to this?
 - Amy said that in terms of DSS, there will be a rate increase for Adult Daycare providers, adult day health providers and home delivered meals providers. In the CHCPE, Category 5, it's for individuals who don't meet NFLOC. There is also a rate increase for PCAs in CFC.
 - Bill chimed in to say that minimum wage in CT increased so rates for overnights and per diem increase to meet the requirements.
 - Tracy Wodatch asked if wage increases will impact home health aides.
 - Bill said these are only for PCAs that do over night and per diem under the CFC program.
 - When will the rate increase take affect?
 - Amy said retro to July 1, 2023.

Adult Family Living Overview – Paul Chase

- Tabled until next meeting.

Peer Support Demo Service – Lauren Carabetta

- This service is available to MFP participants. It is a person who uses their personal experience to engage with an individual. This can be face to face meeting or interaction via technology.
- Staff work to promote strengths and abilities to help improve socialization, self-advocacy and the development of natural supports and community living skills.
- This service includes communication with providers.
- Once the DSS nurses approve the plan, a care management agency sets up the providing service. Service can begin in the nursing facility.
- This service is especially helpful for individuals who have been in a facility for a longer time.
- The service can be provided by an agency, or a self-hired staff through the FI.
- Question
 - Elaine asked how someone can become a peer supporter and how does the program work?
 - Lauren replied that the care manager can discuss the program at time of assessment to see if the individual is interested. This is then added to the care plan for nurse review.
 - To become a peer support person, an individual could be employed by an agency or get self-hired through the FI. There are qualifications for the peer support role.
 - Elaine mentioned the peer support and loss of benefits.
 - Mairead asked if this demo service has been considered to be formalized.
 - Lauren will take this back and investigate it.
 - A suggestion was to have a presentation on Med Connect at the next meeting.

ARPA 9817 Update – Karri Filek

- Under ARPA is a massive plan to rebalance, enhance, strengthen, and expand home and community-based services.
- Plan is posted on the DSS public information website.
- COPE and Capable are two models that offer members choice in the community.
 - COPE is Care of Older Person in their environment. This is for people with dementia diagnosis. Has teaming approach.
 - Capable is Community Aging in Place Advancing Better Living for Elders. This is member directed home based intervention. Helps person age in place.
 - Both models are time limited and require certification or licensure. DSS can support initial fees for licensure for providers.
 - Provider information sessions are coming up next week for providers and agencies who are interested in enrolling.
 - Hoping to start providing these services in February or March of 2024.
 - Working towards adding COPE and Capable as services under the DSS Waiver.

5. New Business

Feedback from the waiver amendment hearings – Amy

- The committees approved all the additions and changes to all our waiver documents, and they are before CMS for final approval.

Barriers to transition in the MFP program

- Mairead mentioned housing is one of the barriers to transition.
 - Individuals with disabilities have challenges maintaining housing.
 - Someone from the Housing Department will be coming to speak to the Committee in February.
 - Please send Mairead your housing questions, issues or concerns prior to the meeting.
6. Public Comment
- Maggie brought up the issue of if someone is in a nursing home for any length of time how much is the cost versus increasing payments?
 - Mairead answered that ideas are being explored.
 - Michael Werner was disappointed that there was not a presentation on the Adult Family Living Program and that the next meeting isn't until February. He is trying to gather as much information as possible for the next legislative session that is coming up. This can help to address workforce shortages, cultural competency, and several issues. He says folks don't realize that there is a program to allow informal caregiving providers to be compensated. For example, the concept of a spouse being an informal caregiver. He would appreciate if Amy or Bill could get back to him about this program.
 - Mairead suggested we get a date on the calendar for this discussion.
 - Question about home modifications through the PCA Waiver. Clients on the PCA Waiver do not access CFC so this is a real barrier to some people.
7. Meeting adjourned at 12.38.

Next meeting: **HYBRID February 2, 2023**