



# State of Connecticut Department of Developmental Services

# DDS

Ned Lamont  
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff  
Commissioner  
Elisa F. Velardo  
Deputy Commissioner

## ARPA DAY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 6, 2023

In Attendance: Beth Fisher, Cynthia DeLouise, Amber Carter, Varian Salters, Keith Lavalette, Sean Bannon, Sue Bastien

SELN Commission: Suzzanne Freeze, Wesley Anderson

McDowell Communications: Maura Fitzgerald

### Minutes

ARPA Day Committee Meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM by Keith Lavalette, Committee Chairperson. A motion was made by Amber Carters to accept the minutes from the February 6, 2023, ARPA Day Committee Meeting and seconded by Beth Fisher. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

### **Presentation: SELN Commission**

**Presenter: Suzzanne Freeze, Wesley Anderson**

#### **Presentation Highlights:**

- **State Employment Leadership Network**
- A Network of 25 member states, discussed Higher Performing Framework where they put a lot of value on leadership then the strategy levers which talk about policy, financing, funding methodology and training that builds competencies throughout your system and them moves to the outcome data and more Integrated jobs.

The State Employment Network was developed because there was a plateau and decline in integrated employment outcomes and increases in facility-based work in the late 90's and early 2000. Last 10 years have seen increases in Integrated employment services but data has also shown that non-work settings have continued to grow. More resources are being filtered into non-work settings. The data also showed a range of individuals participating in integrated employment services go from a 4% investment to up to an 85% investment overall of services. CT is at 38% of total services.

NCI Data shows that 86% of people do not have a job and of that group 51% want a job but 37% don't have an employment goal. It questions about the pathway to employment. If Individual say the want a job, they say that that don't ask for a service. It is up to the provider to decide how the individual gets a job.

Historically individuals in group supported employment had the most significant needs. In Ct the level of support is driven by how the funding works. If they need to request special funding which may or may not be approved. Providers in CT are worried that if the 14C special wage certification goes away then the GSE programs would not be sustainable.

States are considering a shift and what they consider a successful program transformational path and largely states are leaning toward the individual employment model.

States are at the point of considering what really needs to be offered, what is possible and what can be sustained differently than in any time in the last 10 years.

**McDowell Presentation By: (Maura Fitzgerald)**

Maura Fitzgerald provided an update for the committee. Sent out two sets of surveys, one to Individuals and families and one to DDS Employees about what they know about the transformation initiatives and will conduct the survey again in a year to see how we have done with communicating with people.

In process of developing seven video's that will feature different subjects, filming will begin this week or next and the videos will be housed on the DDS website as well as distributed to interested parties.

Working on a Bi-monthly newsletter to be sent out to Individuals/Families, providers and DDS staff Announcing STEP in the newsletter which stands for Supporting Transformation to Empower People. This encompasses the mission, vision, values, and goals of moving people to more independent settings. McDowell is also working on a six-month communication plan to move to a more proactive cadence of messages going out to individuals, families, staff and providers.

DDS is in the process of revising its Appendix K which is the approval process through CMS.

The website for self determination ran into some technical issues that they are looking at resolving.

The assistive technology grants are available now and DDS is receiving the grant requests

**Next Meeting**

*March 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM*

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting by DeLouise/Salters

