

DDS North Region Regional Advisory Council

October 16, 2019
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Rick Rothstein (Chair); Donna Clauson; Joe Duffy; Collette Bement Langner; Ron Langner; Mary Lou O'Connor; Lori Sandora; Tammy Selinger; Elisa Velardo, DDS North Regional Director

Guests: Dawn Clauson; Kim Little

Meeting was called to order at 5:10 pm and began with introductions.

- Legislative Update – nothing new at this time
 - Still working on “blended services” (or now also referred to as “integrated” services) which would combine the residential and day funding into one. The legislature still feels that keeping them separate makes it easier to see what the money is being used for.
 - Two task forces are being developed: 1) The Governor’s Task Force on Housing and Supports – Commissioner Scheff and Josh Scalora will attend for DDS; 2) Employment Task Force – has not yet convened.
 - Joe Duffy will be part of a group that will look at the short and long term needs of individuals with ID. The first meeting held last month worked on narrowing the focus; they will look at needs of aging individuals in all settings. The next meeting is on 10/30 at 1:00pm (will also be televised).
- Regional Director Updates:
 - Elisa Velardo asked Dr. Rachel Duzant, NR Clinical Director, to attend tonight’s meeting to share how the Psychology Department interacts with families.
 - Dr. Duzant explained that there are a lot of referrals from families. Sometimes through schools, hospitals, and our DDS Helpline. Behaviorists are assigned to go out to meet the family wherever they are when a crisis may have occurred. They try to work with families to be able to keep an individual at home. They work with IFS workers at times to try to stabilize a person so they may be able to remain in the home. The division also works with contracted providers. Rachel also works with the private sector in CLA’s, CRS’s, and CCH’s. Dr. Duzant also runs the Social Group that is held here, along with Dr. Val Bagby-Young, which meets once a month. When a referral is made, they go out and meet the person to make sure the group would work for them. If it is not a good fit, they try to refer them to other available resources.
 - A small group attended the family focus group that was held in Willimantic regarding Reimagining Day Services. The group was mostly self-advocates and parents. The people who attended are all employed. They are looking at four areas:
 - 1) What is working
 - 2) What is needed
 - 3) What would you like services to look like
 - 4) Where do you want to be in five years

It was a very good discussion. There will be another held here in East Hartford on October 23rd at 5:00pm; capacity will be 50; RSVPs should go to Dianne Gill at Central Office.

The groups are similar to the retreats that were held regarding emergency needs where ideas such as the 18 Family Support Workers, CCH expansion, and the Step-Down Unit came from. There will be subcommittees established for the feedback from these forums. One will be Assistive Technology, another will be Transportation. The retreats should be complete by the end of November and the feedback will be reviewed. The subcommittees will begin in January.

The ARC is working on developing a survey regarding reimagining day services. A group of eight families worked on the survey. It should be on Survey Monkey for people who cannot attend the forums. Elisa stated that DDS is also working on a way to reach out to families that are not able to attend.

There is also a Facebook page with a survey for people with a LON of 6, 7, or 8.

- Elisa explained the NCI process which is also a packet of questions about day programs, residential services, social activities, etc. Responses are compiled and data is available on the NCI site for CT.
 - A suggestion was made to possibly make the data available to share with families or the RAC. Elisa will speak with Josh Scalora who is very involved in pulling the data. Elisa will also invite him to attend a RAC meeting.
- Step-Down Unit – continues to be up and running. It was established in February and is designed for people to get out of the hospital into a transitional place to transition out after a limited stay when stabilized. Case managers make a referral to the Regional Director. It is currently at capacity. The Regional Directors meet monthly with Cres Secchiaroli, Public Regional Director, who oversees the program.
- Emergency Transitional Housing – there will be one in each region. Letters of Intent have been received for the North and South Regions by providers. Proposals were received for all but Wilton. There will be less clinical staff in these units. They will be able to respond rapidly in a crisis situation. The North Region will be awarded in the near future and should be operational in December. The South Region needs some work, should open after the first of the year. The Wilton location will be re-issued. The capacity is three at each setting.
- Working as part of NASDDS on a quality enhancement system (like a project model) to look at how a process has been working; beginning with Mortality Review. It has been an opportunity to look at all of them to see what is working. Dr. Bagby-Young is working on this one.
- A project has just started regarding Critical Incident Reports after the AIG report. Definitions are being reviewed, and a lot of progress has been made with reports being submitted electronically.
- Grads – As of right now, 50 grads have not yet identified a day program. They are all in various points in the process. The PRAT manager is in the process of breaking down where people are in the process. Some have had an issue with not being able to find openings.
- Abuse & Neglect – Elisa explained the process of how investigations occur and are assigned. There was an issue with someone being in the car when there was a police incident. The Department was notified, and the Abuse & Neglect Liaison was notified. It is then shared with the regional Director of Investigations. If there is police involvement, they take precedence over the investigation. Depending on the situation, that is what dictates what happens next in the process. If an IPSP is issued, there is an immediate response and a plan is written to address the situation. These are only for very serious situations. The majority of cases require an investigation. An investigator is assigned. If it is in Public, a DDS investigator will do the investigation, IFS cases are done by an AIG investigator, and private agencies do their own investigations. They have 60 days to complete and then it is submitted to our Investigation Division who review all investigations, and there may be some back and forth discussion with the investigator that did the report. Once it is approved, it is submitted to the Regional Director or their designee who will review and sign off or offer additional recommendations. If it is an allegation of abuse, the person is taken off duty. Cases of abuse are also reported to the Registry and the case is reviewed again.

- January Elections to the RAC –
 - Elisa went over the expected composition for the Council. Members' terms were reviewed and elections for officers will be held in January. Since we do not have a member that is receiving services from DDS, Elisa will inquire at her next provider meeting if there is anyone interested. Kim Little stated that her daughter, Ellyn, may be interested. She will speak with her.

- November RAC Meeting – the meeting in November will be a joint meeting with the Council on Developmental Services and the other Regional councils. It will be held on **November 21st at 5:00pm at the DDS Wallingford Office (35 Thorpe Ave., 3rd Floor)**. The regular NR meeting scheduled for November 20th will not be held.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Neumann
Executive Secretary