

DDS North Region
Regional Advisory Council

February 15, 2017
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Collette Bement Langner, Chair; Richard Rothstein, Vice Chair; Nancy Bilyak, Joe Duffy, Ronald Langner, Tammy Selinger, Andrew Selinger

Staff: Elisa Velardo, Claudia Neumann

Guests: Mary Lou O'Connor, Donna Cohen, Laurie McKenney

Meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm.

Meeting began with introductions.

- Budget Updates –
 - Elisa Velardo thanked Collette for sending the budget summary information (emailed to members). It was heartening to see that the Governor included some initiatives for developmental services. Also good to see that there will be a greater initiative to enhance the Community Companion Home (CCH) program. Having some resources identified for that model is exciting. There are currently 24 CCH providers in process in the North Region. Elisa explained the CCH model and that it is very important to get the correct match on an individual basis. There are approximately 100 already in place and are matched with individuals. A suggestion was made to have someone from the CCH division come and present to the Council about the process. Elisa will follow up with the CCH manager. There was also a question raised regarding whether there is a qualified back-up available if the provider has to go out. Elisa stated that there is a network within the CCH system which provides the opportunity for respite to be available. Other CCH providers also provide respite for each other. DDS sponsors an annual event to connect providers with each other.
 - Grads are a concern since there was no funding included in the budget. A letter was sent to the Governor saying that this is very important to families and they will be continuing to work on this.
 - The Appropriations Hearing is scheduled for February 23rd at 4:00pm at the LOB, Rm. 2C. Acting Commissioner Scheff will be speaking in the morning. It is very important for families to attend if possible, even if not to testify. It is important just to be present. It has made a difference to make the legislature more aware. Richard Rothstein shared the letter that was sent to the Governor.
 - The Waitlist Project is set to roll out on March 1st. Part of the purpose is also to collect more accurate data on what people's needs actually are. Everyone who has an IP will be asked what their needs are.
 - The cut to the PS (Personnel Services) line was \$50 million, however, the conversions are all on hold right now due to the pending lawsuit that state employee unions have brought.

- A question was asked regarding whether age-outs are still getting services automatically anymore. Elisa stated that we continue to plan for age-outs unless the person no longer has that need.
- A question was asked about people with a LON of 5 or less and if they would be losing funding for day services. Elisa explained that anyone with a LON of 5 or lower, who is referred to a DSO program, must go through the PRAT process.
- IDASH Program – The RFP was issued and some funds have been identified for a target group. \$20 million (bond money) has been set aside for the program. Private providers will be matched with individuals. Leases would be restricted for 30 years. At that time, the developer would not have to renew leases. There will be rolling admissions for developers who want to apply. These will be cluster-type settings; low-income affordable housing. Twenty-five percent of the units will be set aside for the DD population, the rest will be regular low-income housing units.
- The IP redesign was discussed and the need to make sure that expectations are realistically shared with families by case managers, not giving options that are not realistic.
- Regional Updates
 - Elisa shared that we have been able to post some case manager positions to be refilled which has been helpful since we have had so many vacancies for quite some time. Many people have been without case managers, however, they have been able to utilize the Helpline which has been a very useful resource to assist families and direct them to resources.
- Other Discussion:
 - The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) will be holding their national convention here in Hartford at the Hartford Convention Center on June 25-28, 2017.
 - A public hearing will be held for all bills pertaining to DDS. The date will be shared on the Facebook page.
 - OPA is moving forward. An agency has been selected and there is a hearing being held on March 10th at the DOT in Newington.
 - A question was asked about the system for Incident Reporting (IR's). The reports are difficult to read. Elisa stated that the hope is to have an electronic system in the very near future which would apply to both private agencies, as well as DDS.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 15th at 5:00 pm**. Please contact Claudia Neumann if there are any items to be added to the agenda.

Respectfully submitted,
Claudia Neumann
Executive Secretary