

DDS North Region
Regional Advisory Council

November 15, 2017

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Collette Bement Langner (Chair); Rick Rothstein (Vice-Chair); Nancy Bilyak; Joe Duffy; Ron Langner; Lori Sandora; Annette Scully; Tammy Selinger; Kathleen Tetreault

Guests: Andrea Caldwell; Mary Lou O'Connor; Pat Stavola

Staff: Elisa Velardo; Karen Sticklin; Claudia Neumann

Meeting was called to order at 5:04 pm.

Meeting began with introductions. Regional Director, Elisa Velardo, stated that we are very sad to report that long-time Council member Nancy Bilyak will be leaving the RAC after tonight's meeting. Nancy is a parent who has served on the Council for 39 years. We thank her for her tireless advocacy and involvement with the RAC. She will surely be missed!

- CFC Discussion – There has now been an issue for individuals currently on the program being re-assessed. The issue is that they are now using a new assessment tool that does not match the DDS LON assessment. More information is needed. Will continue to try to get more information.
- Karen Sticklin, Assistant Regional Director, Individual & Family Support – Karen was invited to attend the meeting tonight to briefly explain the IFS division which works with individuals living at home with their families. Karen oversees 55 case managers, and 2 Helpline case managers (who serve mostly children). She oversees the Family Grant Program and explained that the majority of grant funding is going to personal support and respite. This program did have \$1 million, and now has only \$1,000. IFS also oversees the scheduling of stays at the three respite centers. Last fiscal year there were 780 stays (400 families were supported) with some attending twice during the year. The IFS division did have 15 Family Support positions, however, currently we only have 7. These positions are used for temporary support services, not long-term. Currently we have only one Transition Advisor (2 positions are vacant) who works with the schools to explore resources.

We currently have 23 Emergencies in the NR (individuals with extreme emergencies). There are over 60 Emergencies statewide. Natural supports are looked at first, Community Companion Homes are considered, and in-home supports are explored. The respite centers are not available for emergencies since they are full Thursdays through Mondays. Emergencies are sometimes in hospitals and then we work with the hospitals to coordinate available services. The problem is that it is very case-by-case and options that would work for one individual would not work for someone else.

Karen reported that we have just hired six new case managers which should be helpful.

Karen also oversees the planning for grads. We have 106 for the North Region that need to be planned for who graduate in June. We have just started planning for the first 50 grads.

- Charting the Life Course – it was explained that this is a new way of looking at individuals' goals. It is a way to help focus on services and supports, focusing on community and other resources outside of DDS. There is a section on the website called "Across the Life Span" which shares resources and information for families. It is a Person-Centered Plan tool. Robin Wood has been presenting to schools and they have been very open to it.

- Combined Council Meeting – Rick Rothstein reported that the meeting that was held in October with all of the RAC’s and the Central Office Council was well attended by all regions. Some issues that were discussed:
 - The new Deputy Commissioner was announced. Peter Mason is now the Deputy Commissioner for DDS.
 - There will now be a statewide Public Division which will be under Cres Secchiaroli.
 - There has been some hiring; there has been no word of a freeze yet, even though that was part of the budget.
 - There was some discussion of the RAC’s Facebook pages; a meeting is scheduled for 11/21/17 at 11:00am at Central Office to discuss possible concerns.

- Nomination of Officers for 2018
 - Tonight will be Collette Bement Langner’s last meeting as Chair.
 - 2018 Nominations:
 - Chair - Richard Rothstein was nominated, motion was made and seconded, and vote was unanimous in favor of Richard becoming new Chair.
 - Vice Chair - Kathleen Tetreault was nominated, motion was made and seconded, and vote was unanimous in favor of Kathleen becoming Vice Chair.
 - Secretary - Tammy Selinger was nominated, motion was made and seconded, and vote was unanimous in favor of Tammy continuing as Secretary.

 - Regional Updates:
 - Elisa reported that we have the green light to go ahead with the first 50 grads. We have 106 total for the North Region. A priority list developed by case managers will be used. It will not be based on just LON scores. Evaluation will be done consistently statewide. Will be looking at family need, i.e. single parents, people losing skills, people who are in crisis, etc. There have been some issues with providers not accepting referrals so some may take longer to find a program. We are continuing to work on this issue.

 - Case managers have been going through some Person-Centered Plan training. We should start to see some of the outcomes in the IPs.

 - Healthy Relationships training is in week four of the six-week training.

 - Waiting for further interpretation of the budget and if there will be rescissions and what the effect will be.

 - We are still continuing to see retirements occurring at a rapid pace.

 - There are two homes being converted to the private sector in the North Region. Ten homes total will be converted statewide.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Neumann

Executive Secretary

DDS North Region