

**DDS-South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2014**

Members Present

Chair Jean Brookman, Carol Cooney, Jeffery DePina, Susan Gardner, Steve Harney, Diane Martin, and Thomas Dailey, DDS South Region Regional Director

Guests

Denise Shepard and Margaret Mummert

Call to Order

Chair Brookman called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Introductions

All made introductions.

Citizen Comment

None presented.

Approval of Minutes

Review ensued of the January 15, 2014, meeting minutes.

In the presence of a quorum, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the January meeting, with the correction noted during the meeting.

Chairperson's Report

- **Creative Housing Workgroup Update (Diane Martin)** - Continues to meet monthly at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook on the second Thursday of each month. A core group of members attend meetings regularly, while others come and go. The Wiggio networking site didn't work out, so Ms. Brookman is exploring establishing a "closed" Facebook site. UCP presented to the group to discuss their La Triumphe apartment complex model in Groton. This model allows for shared services. Assisted Living Technologies, Inc. of Meriden presented at the last workgroup meeting. The Channel 8 News story featuring a DDS consumer who lives in a high-tech home was aired during the meeting. Mr. Dailey pointed out that the annual cost of the technology used in the home is about \$3,000. CIL and Vista are scheduled to present at upcoming meetings.

- **Field Activities Update** - In the absence of member Lewis, Chair Brookman provided the update.
 1. A hearing on H.B. No. 5534, An Act Concerning the Provision of Services to Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities, was held today. This bill would require DDS to publish a plan that would provide services by July 1, 2016, to every person eligible to receive services from the Department, including individuals currently on the waiting lists.
 2. A hearing on H.B. No. 5558, An Act Concerning Services for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder, was also held today. This bill seeks to require the provision of certain services to persons diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and establish a pilot program for such persons.
 3. The Arc Family Lobby Day held in February was a huge success and resulted in the establishment of a caucus for people with intellectual disability. The next lobby day is March 26 from 10:00 - Noon.

The Regional Director's office will follow-up with DDS' Division of Legislative Affairs on the Council's request to be added to their list serve.

Regional Director's Report

- **Grads/Age-Outs** - FY14 Grads and Age-Outs will start on time. For Individual supported employment, some may start as early as April. Day program funding is expected to be available in July.
- **Funding Allocation Process** - Efforts to streamline the funding allocation process are underway.
- **LEA Outreach** - Mr. Dailey has met with East Haven High School, North Branford Public Schools staff, New Haven Public Schools staff, and the southern chapter of SPED directors. An evening presentation to families of Cromwell Public Schools will be held on April 9. Goal is to help families learn about the services available from DDS and the community and how to access them.
- **Transition Services** - Based on national feedback, CT is considered a model of supports in helping individuals transition from school supports to adult supports.
- **Person-Centered Counselors** - CMS would like state agencies that provide human services to develop "No Wrong Door" policies, i.e. if you apply for services at DDS, but are really eligible for services from DMHAS; DDS would help you gain access to DMHAS. Helpline Case Managers and Eligibility Unit staff will receive Person-Centered Counselor certification training first. The training curriculum is being developed by Michael Smull in collaboration with Boston University. CMS may fund this initiative.

Discussion focused on DSS redeterminations issues. The RD's office will invite the DDS Director of Waiver Services to an upcoming RAC meeting to present on this topic.

- **Wheel Chair Regulations** - DSS has put a hold on implementing the proposed wheelchair regulations in response to strong advocacy by families. The regulations will be rewritten and subjected to the full regulatory process. DSS will continue to use the statutory definition of medical necessity in reviewing requests for coverage of customized wheelchairs until further notice. The RD's office will follow-up with the DDS Director of Waiver Services for updates on this issue.
- **Camp Harkness** - The High Hopes Therapeutic Riding program will expand this summer. A feasibility study for camp improvements over the next 15-20 years is being planned. Recent improvements include renovations to the brown cabins and upgrades to the dining hall and the bathhouse. In response to an inquiry regarding funding, Mr. Dailey explained that DDS has different funding categories for different purposes.

Discussion ensued on family camping opportunities and camp programs operated by private providers.

- **CMS' Definition of Community** - CMS has issued its definition of community. A copy of the definition and a copy of Arc's interpretation of it will be forwarded to the Council with the minutes. In brief, institutional settings will not be considered community settings. The definition focuses on person centeredness and community involvement for all people.
- **Training Academy** - The DDS Training Academy concept is moving forward. Created under an agreement between the State and District 1199, the Academy will train direct care staff that will be assigned to the Individual & Family Support Division in the future. Classes are scheduled to begin April 7.
- **Staffing Updates**
 - IFS Teams have expanded to 11 staff in each region.
 - Case management positions have been requested.
 - Approval to hire direct care staff to replace some retired staff was received today. These positions will be used to fill long-time CLA vacancies. All positions will be posted on the DAS website.

General Discussion

General discussion ensued on the following:

- Self-Directed Services
- Provider Mentoring Project
- Residential Support Models
- Residential Rate Guidelines (Copy to be forwarded to the Council with the minutes.)

New Business

No new business was presented.

Old Business

Membership Recruitment - The RD's office has been informed that there are no limitations to Kathleen Stauffer's appointment to the Council in her role of Executive Director of the Arc New London County. To this end, the Regional Director's office recommended her appointment to the Commissioner, on the Council's behalf. This appointment meets the following statutory criteria: "At least one member shall be designated by a local chapter of the Arc of Connecticut in the region."

Ms. Denise Shepard expressed her interest in joining the council. The Regional Director's office will recommend her appointment to the Commissioner, on the Council's behalf.

Once these appointments are made, the Council will have a full complement of members.

Adjournment - With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jolie Crescimano-Goss

Jolie Crescimano-Goss

Executive Secretary

DDS-South Region