



PCA Workforce Council Special Meeting November 14, 2022

Council Members in Attendance: Claudio Gualtieri (Chair), Office of Policy and Management (OPM); Dawn Lambert, Department of Social Services (DSS); Denise Paladino, Department of Developmental Services (DDS); Adam Prizio, Office of the Health Care Advocate (OHA); Eileen Healy, Independence Northwest; Margaret Shugrue-Szymanski, Parent.

Others in Attendance: Jose Michael Gonzalez, DSS; Gregory McMahon and Beth Aura Miller, DDS; Melissa Morton, OPM and Heather Ferguson-Hull (Council staff).

Call to order by Chair Claudio Gualtieri at 11:31 AM

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Gualtieri welcomed the Council members and guests and previewed the agenda. He noted that the development of a PCA registry is a statutorily required deliverable of the Workforce Council.

2. PCA Registry RFP Update

Greg McMahon, DDS, provided the Council with an update on the development of a joint DSS and DDS Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a vendor to serve as the state's PCA employment network. He noted that the term "employment network" is being used rather than "registry" in order to differentiate it from DDS' preexisting abuse and neglect registry that is commonly referred to as "the registry". He shared that Beth Aura Miller, DDS, was the primary author of the RFP, and noted that because RFP development is a sealed process, they are limited in what information can be shared at this point. Mr. McMahon said that stakeholder input was important to this process, and that they used information gathered from consumer-employers, their families, PCAs, Union representatives and state agency staff, during focus groups conducted by the DSS contractor Mintz+Hoke in 2017. He noted that some things have changed since 2017, most notably the available technology. Mr. McMahon said that they hope to finish the RFP by January 1, 2023, and that they are working through the payment methodology and budgeting considerations.

Ms. Miller added that the agencies looked at input from the Council, the Union, consumer-employers and PCAs and tried to incorporate as much as they could in the RFP. She noted that the biggest change in technology is the availability of a mobile app. Mr. McMahon stated that the purpose of this meeting is to ensure the Council is involved, and he noted the Council's statutory requirement to develop a registry. He also shared that Heather Ferguson-Hull, Council Staff, would be permitted to review the RFP after signing a non-disclosure agreement. In addition, he noted that DDS recently completed its own RFP process for an employment network to cover the period until



the joint RFP process is completed and vendor selected. Rewarding Work was awarded the contract with DDS.

Mr. Gualtieri highlighted the importance of empowering members who are self-directing, so they can customize their care. He also stressed the value of having a network that can connect consumer-employers with back-up care, which should be of benefit to consumer-employers and their family caregivers who often provide informal support.

Denise Paladino echoed that customizing care is key. She expressed her hope that there would be filtering capabilities on the app so that consumer-employers could share specific practical skills needed of their PCAs. She also said that a geographic filter would be important, as well as notation of which PCAs are qualified by either DSS or DDS or both.

Eileen Healy asked if PCAs could be pre-approved by the Fiscal Intermediary, so that emergency backup would be readily available. Dawn Lambert noted that two-hour enrollments were done during the Public Health Emergency, and that each PCA needs to be on the plan and connected to a specific employer. She said that PCAs would have to be pre-vetted. Mr. McMahon shared that they will be looking at the best way to structure this process, including background checks. This piece is important, but they cannot “recommend” PCAs.

Adam Prizio said that he thinks it is important for consumer-employers to know the scope of what is covered in the background checks that are done. Mr. Gualtieri noted that the Homemaker Companion Task Force is also considering some of the issues regarding background checks. Ms. Lambert shared that DSS does not do a national background check, and consumer-employers need to know what is included in the scope of these checks. Ms. Lambert also responded to Ms. Paladino’s comment, noting that creating a “verified user” feature could be considered. Ms. Paladino highlighted the importance of consumer-employers being comfortable with who they are hiring, and she suggested a drop-down menu that could indicate certain specialty areas in which PCAs have documented experience.

Peg Shugrue-Szymanski asked if there could be a mechanism by which consumer-employers could refer a PCA to their friends. She emphasized the importance of referrals among the self-directing community.

Mr. Prizio suggested that consumer-employers might share recommendations periodically, so that the information would not be impacted by any end-of-employment issues. He also noted the importance of consumer-employers not disclosing any personal health information through this registry.

Ms. Paladino said that the app should be responsive and intuitive. She hoped it could be updated regularly, and filter which PCAs are currently available to work. Ms. Miller said the registry would be



Claudio Gualtieri
Chair

reliant on its users to share up-to-date information. Ms. Lambert wondered if the technology that ride-sharing apps use could be utilized, so that the system would automatically ping the next available provider that meets the criteria specified by the consumer-employer.

Mr. Gualtieri asked if there would be additional opportunities for Council members to share their feedback. Ms. Miller asked that any additional comments be shared as soon as possible, as they wish to move forward with the RFP within the week. Mr. McMahon asked Council members to send any additional comments to Jose Michael Gonzalez.

3. Public Comment

None offered

4. Adjournment

Vote to Adjourn: Eileen Healy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Adam Prizio seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 12:09 PM.

Full meeting recording can be accessed here:

<https://youtu.be/QeN9ieJqAc>