



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo
Deputy Commissioner

Minutes of December 19, 2022 - ARPA Individual and Family Engagement Transformational Committee

Location: Meeting held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Greg McMahon, Shannon Jacovino, Joanne Malise, Adrianna Ramirez, Jessica Sundell, Dr. Cheryl Ellis, Kevin Arce, Geri Kogut, Denise Palladino, Maricruz Ortiz,

Absent: Joanne Malise, Pat Tyler, Lena Esposito

Guests: Kimberly Butts, Kevin Bronson (DDS), Rebecca Brockway (McDowell Communications), Maura Fitzgerald (McDowell Communications), Julia Oak (Deloitte), Betsy Bella (Deloitte)

1. Call to Order by Greg McMahon. Public Meeting Requirements were reviewed.
2. Minutes from previous meeting were approved.
3. Updates & Announcements
 - **Deloitte Update** on Stakeholder Input Sessions– Sessions will take place in January. There will be a Day session, a Residential session, a Self-Advocate session, a Spanish Individual & Family session in Spanish, a Provider session, and a DDS staff session. The invitation for the Day & Res. Sessions for Individuals & Families went out on social media. Members of the committee have seen it. The Spanish session will go out through DDS Case Managers.
 - **Provider Transformations Plans** – Phase 1 is underway. a notice to providers has gone out. 16 providers have responded. 8 are planning to submit plans. 8 are exploring whether to submit a plan. The responses from providers have been evenly split across regions, and residential and day. One provider will submit a whole agency transformation. DDS will send a plan template to providers had been discussion about allowing an individual who leaves a CLA or CRS to keep those higher rates for some time for transition and program enhancements. Still no answer about safety net funding for individuals who commit to a lease, if move to an apartment does not work out. Phase 2 will begin in March and will draw upon lessons learned in Phase 1.
 - The rent subsidy issue is still being looked at. DDS is very aware that this is a problem and is looking at how to support people with rent and security if an apartment does not work out.
 - The guide to the DDS Transformation and ARPA for Individuals and Families has been finalized and it is going out as a letter to individuals and families from Commissioner Scheff with the announcement of 6 individual and family stakeholder forums.

4. Review & feedback of DDS service definitions: In Home Supports definition
 - To help with the transformation and to help individuals and families in general a list with information about service definitions should be easy to locate on website, in plain language and easy to understand, and it should outline the benefits and challenges.
 - The goal is to put this information in one place. There is currently information about service options in several places on the website, and it is generally not in a form that is understandable to individuals and families.
 - DDS is working with website content experts to address this. Greg, Shannon, and Dr. Ellis will all be meeting with the website consultants and will share information from this committee and from experiences with families.
 - In Home Supports – this type of funding can be used in a family home, an apartment, in a cluster or in supported housing. The committee discussed ways to present the information. No consensus was reached. Some suggestions were to:
 - Base definitions on what type of support people want as opposed to a support or waiver definition.
 - Standardize definitions.
 - Use categories such as “24 hour supports”, “family home” and “outside of family home” and list all the service options that offer that level of support.
 - Don’t overload people with information. Give a brief description that helps people know what questions to ask and how to explore options with their provider and Case Manager.
 - Others pointed out that many families want more than a brief description, they want the whole picture.
 - DDS staff pointed out that families should not be solely reliant on getting information from DDS Case Managers. It is important for families to have more, not less information because not everyone at DDS is well versed on all options. Case Managers are assigned to specific areas such a CCH, private division, self-direction... and they tend to present what they know.
5. Review committee Teams page
 - Using Teams with members who are not in the DDS system is not as simple a process as we thought.
 - The DDS IT department has other options that may work better for our committee based on what people want to use Teams for.
 - The committee was polled on what they were looking for. Most people thought a platform for storing documents and presentations reviewed, minutes, recordings, and the ability to update documents in real time would be good, but no one felt strongly this was something the committee needed.
6. Open discussion& questions individuals and families will have about ARPA Transformation Goal in hiring.
 - Nothing raised.
7. The 2023 meeting schedule was approved by the committee.
8. Next meeting is January 9, 2023 at 10:00am
9. Meeting adjourned.