



State of Connecticut  
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont  
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff  
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo  
Deputy Commissioner

Minutes of September 29, 2022 - ARPA Individual and Family Engagement Transformational Committee

Location: Meeting held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Greg McMahon, Shannon Jacovino, Kevin Arce, Maricruz Ortiz, Geri Kogut, Adrianna Ramirez, Lena Esposito, Dr. Cheryl Ellis

Guests: Steve Morris, Executive Director, Favarh (The Arc of Farmington Valley), Mel Reno, parent & Favarh board member, Penny Phillips, Marketing & Communications Director, Favarh, and Kimberly Butts, Support Staff

Absent: Denise Palladino, Jessica Sundell, Pat Tyler, Joanne Malise

1. Call to Order by Greg McMahon. Public Meeting Requirements were reviewed.
2. Moving forward the ARPA Individual and Family Engagement Transformational Committee will need to use Roberts Rules of Order, and will need to vote on minutes, adjournment of meetings, and the work product of the committee.
3. Supported Housing Presentation given by Steve Morris, Executive Director, Favarh and Mel Reno, parent & Favarh board member. Power Point attached.

Elements of Supported Housing:

- a. Affordable – built with low income tax credit, all individuals receive a rent subsidy
  - b. Permanent – individuals can age in place.
  - c. Minimum size for development (Favarh has found there must be at least 10 people for service efficiencies)
  - d. Integrated – no more than 25% of renters with IDD
  - e. 24-hour staffing/ staff office onsite – Cluster funding can be used to allow for shared overnight staffing. CRS funding can be used for 3-bedroom apartment for individuals who need staff in apartment.
  - f. Smart Home Technology
  - g. Other Favarh amenities: healthy meal delivery, inclusive recreational opportunities for all residents
4. Questions/discussion after the presentation:
    - How can individuals with high levels of need be supported? Parent Mel Reno's daughter moved from a group home where she had lived for 16 years to a 3-bedroom apartment in integrated development. CRS funding. 24-hour staffing in apartment. Mel felt she needed to be challenged. There has been an increase independence, doing chores. She wants more independence. More activities, more opportunities to get out into the community.

- Everyone has their own bedroom.
- There is no age limit for Supported Housing.
- Are there people who are difficult to support/can't be supported using Supported Housing?
  - a. It is difficult to support people who have behaviors that cause them to be unpredictably loud at odd hours.
  - b. People in wheelchairs. Safety issue due to staffing ratios. It would be difficult to evacuate an individual in a wheelchair.

Favarh is looking for solutions to these issues.

- Can an individual choose to self-direct or change providers?
  - a. There is nothing preventing an individual who self directs their supports from getting an apartment in the complex.
  - b. When the units are built one provider works with the developer. Once an individual has been accepted, they can exercise portability if they wish to use another provider. Favarh sees this as a motivation for providers to work harder.
- All supports are funded through In-Home Supports, or CRS funding.
  - a. In Home Support (IHS) Funding – staff assigned according to staffing allocation (multiple person rates make this attractive for providers), use cluster funding for overnight staff. Individuals are not staffed, but staff is always available. Smart Technology used for regular checks and monitoring.
  - b. In CRS units, 24 hours staffing in apartment. Designed for people who need more support. Families are finding their loved ones are thriving and increasing independence.
- Developments built within walking distance of public transportation when it is available.
- How are locations chosen? What criteria?
 

Developers choose location. Access to transportation, medical providers, grocery stores and entertainment are all important and could be factors in the approval process.

At Favarh, families got involved with presenting project to community.

- Collaborative process with provider, individuals, families, staff, developers.
- What is the process for being selected? Is there a waiting list?
 

DDS approves individuals and sends provider a list. Provider then determines who would be the best match for program, roommates... Vacancies are filled well in advance. There is more interest than capacity. Some individuals referred by DDS did not already have residential funding and were approved only for a particular development.

## 5. Open Discussion

Greg is working on creating a draft of provider incentives that will be mor easily understandable/accessible by the next committee meeting.

The Communication consultant should be able to help us distribute information to families in a way that is accessible for individuals who deaf and hard of hearing, or who don't have English as a first language.

There was discussion about how to use closed captions in Teams for live committee meetings. Subtitles are available in different languages in replay on YouTube.

6. Next Meeting: October 10, 2022 10:00am-11:30am
7. Meeting adjourned at 11:29am