



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo
Deputy Commissioner

DRAFT Minutes of January 10, 2023 ARPA Advisory Committee Meeting

Location: Meeting held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Peter Mason, Keith Lavalette, Tracey Walker, Greg McMahon, Michael Beloff, Win Evarts, Katie Banzhaf, Cheryl Ellis, Shannon Jacovino, Brian Smith, Kevin Bronson, Kate Haaland, Steven Siegelaub
McDowell attendance- Maura Fitzgerald
Absent: Barry Simon, Paige Librandi, Melissa Kremmel, Kathleen Staffer

Keith Lavalette, Chair, called the meeting to order

Keith Lavalette read the Public Meeting Requirements

Minutes of the 12/13/2022 Advisory Committee meeting were approved on a motion by Walker/Jacovino with one abstention.

Update from Committee co-chairs

Residential Transformational Committee- Peter Mason provided an update including:

- Heather LaTorra from Marrakech Inc. presented to the residential committee on a CLA apartment program. An individual from the program presented and this program is similar to a transition house. It was started in 1987.
- The McDowell communications survey that went out was discussed. A letter is going to providers explaining the survey. Survey went to the legally responsible person and was sent to 9200 people of individuals who live in congregate settings. Guardians are asked to fill out the survey with the individual if at all possible. The goal is to measure outcomes and send survey again at end of year and see if there is any improvement .
- Discussion on Phase 1 – 22 agencies have submitted surveys indicating they were interested in participating in Phase 1 with 11 agencies saying they are definitely submitting plans in Phase 1.
- Discussion on the new rates occurred during the residential meeting. Peter needs to go back to Scott McWilliams and Central Office regarding questions.
- The committee will continue to work on issues with family and providers and also the rent subsidy piece to make it more beneficial for individuals moving to less restrictive environments.

Day Transformational Committee – Keith Lavalette provided the committee summary including:

- The Day Transformational Committee met on 1/9/2023 and had presentations from both Deloitte and McDowell.
- Deloitte discussed the start of Phase 1 and that 22 agencies have submitted surveys indicating their interest in submitting plans.
- Maura Fitzgerald, McDowell, gave a presentation to the committee similar to the residential committee presentation on the survey that went out to 9200 individuals
- The Day Committee is also working on barriers preventing individuals from moving from congregate settings to more independent settings.

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DDS Engagement Committee: Peter Mason gave a brief update for the DDS committee stating that the committee is looking at a newsletter and expanding it working with McDowell communications to go out to everyone, including families, providers and DDS staff so everyone is seeing the same information.

Individual/Family Engagement Committee: Greg McMahon summarized their last meeting. They are reviewing service descriptions and asking families to review and try to create a single place where families can go and learn about the different services.

Discussions with McDowell about creating videos that are educational along with promotional but give a good description of the service and how to launch them in a meaningful way.

Maura Fitzgerald from McDowell Communication presented to the advisory committee.

She discussed the survey that went out and they are looking to hear from as many people as possible. She asked the ~~the~~ committees promote and encourage individuals in returning the surveys.

McDowell will also be creating 7 videos that will include: Customized Employment, Supportive Housing, Individualized Home Supports, Assistive Technology, Community Companion Homes, Remote Supports and Self Direction. Each Video will be three to four minutes long with an introduction from the Commissioner. Finally, they are working on a newsletter along with a communication plan. They are working in conjunction with Deloitte consulting.

ARPA Initiative Update: Peter Mason provided an update on the ARPA initiatives including

- The Transformational update is in Phase 1 now. 22 providers have submitted surveys indicating they are interested in participating in Phase 1. Training is being provided to DDS staff this week and working on role of CO and ARPA team moving forward with working with each region.
- 9200 surveys went out to the responsible party for individuals living in congregate settings.
- Stakeholder forums are being set up with Deloitte Consulting and DDS. Also looking to see if a Spanish speaking session can be held if possible.
- Deloitte consulting has begun working on Phase 2, looking at CT along with 5 other states as well as the input sessions and will submit a plan to DDS to determine how to move forward in Phase 2.
- A second NOO for Assistive Technology has gone out with a rolling submission date.
- Establishing an AT and Me project that teams self advocates with peer to peer training.
- Providing opportunities for providers to have staff trained in Assistive Technology.
- Contracted with Rewarding work – redesigning current employment network website to be able to advertise and recruit staff.
- NOO is being developed for supportive housing in a non-project based housing in an existing complex
- Critical Incident reporting is on track with Pulselight
- DDS is looking for an off- the- shelf case management system with an authorization system, currently looking at other states that have this system.
- Universal Assessments is moving forward but has a lot of training components and will take longer to complete.
- UCONN will be conducting the National Core Indicators survey this year..

Issues for Future Meetings

- Will there be any money available and budgeted for training as agencies move into providing Less restrictive environments
- Hesitance by DDS to streamline financial matters such as ownership of homes, Shared Living, Families owning property and bring in supports.
- Related party issues come into play.
- Rent subsidy problems the HUD guidelines.
- Lack of support for the interim measures from the provider perspective.

- Help people understand how different kinds of funding can be combined to help people create a plan.
- Need to understand the impact of the new rates, need transparency and the staffing shortage is the big stumbling block preventing agencies from moving forward.

Advisory committee agreed to continue current schedule of meetings for year meeting every other week on Tuesday's at 1:30pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 24th at 1:30pm.