



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo
Deputy Commissioner

DRAFT Minutes of April 4, 2023, ARPA Advisory Committee Meeting

Location: Meeting held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Peter Mason, Keith Lavalette, Tracey Walker, Win Everts, , Cheryl Ellis, Shannon Jacovino, Barry Simon, Paige Librandi, Michael Beloff, Greg McMahon, Kathleen Stauffer, Kate Haaland, Brian Smith, Lauren Grey, Kevin Bronson

Deloitte attendance- Betsy Bella, Julia Oak

McDowell Attendance- Maura Fitzgerald, Rebecca Brockway

Absent: Katie Banzhaf, Melissa Kremmel

Peter Mason, Chair, called the meeting to order

Peter Mason read the Public Meeting Requirements

Minutes of the 3/21/2023 Advisory Committee meeting were approved on a motion by Simon/Everts.

Update from Committee co-chairs

Residential Transformational Committee- The residential committee met on March 2nd. McDowell presented to the committee, Peter gave an update to the committee on the changes to Appendix K. Developing an FAQ with Deloitte and questions raised by providers and Individuals and families and DDS is continuing to work on those. Conversation about shared living vs. shared housing and discussed the transformational plans that were submitted at that time.

Day Transformational Committee- The Committee met on 4/3. McDowell discussed the STEP- Supporting Transformation to Empower People, which reflects DDS's long term commitment to move people to greater levels of independence. They have also developed a logo which was approved by DDS. They continue to develop the seven informational videos. Five have been shot with two more to be completed. Deloitte discussed the five plans that have been received so far. Two day committee members also stated that they have submitted plans. All regions are participating in this transformational process. The day committee has decided to move to a one-time per month meeting schedule.

Individual and Family Committee: McDowell attended the meeting and reviewed the logo and the STEP. They discussed the one-page program descriptions to accompany the videos. Received an update from Deloitte and the five providers who have submitted plans. It was well received from the committee members to hear the thought process of those providers and their thinking about their transformational plans. The committee also discussed how to reach out to families who might be hard to reach and /or marginalized families.

DDS Engagement Committee: McDowell and Deloitte presented to keep the committee updated on their progress. The committee discussed additional ways to communicate and train our case managers. In March a whole series of trainings were completed to specifically target the ARPA Initiative and the STEP transformation program. Developing more locally focus forums that case managers who have taken part in the transformation initiative will be able to present to other case managers.

Deloitte Presentation: Betsy Bella provided an update on STEP. Research and stakeholder input provided so DDS can take action to work with providers, individuals and families to build a more person-centered system through STEP. Deloitte is in progress of creating a more public facing document describing the transformational model. Presented a driver diagram that breaks down the complex problems in a way that helps identify key decision points. The Aims are what your working towards and the change lever is the focus area that we are moving towards. The change ideas and the change activity were provided to the committee. All the information presented is important to help guide DDS as they implement STEP. Discussed the different focus areas including:

- Outreach and support to individuals and families considering transitions
The change ideas for this lever include:
 1. Support individuals to understand options
 2. Increase access to benefits counseling
 3. Provide information to case managers
 4. Provide information to providers
- Work with partners to connect people to diverse employment options
The change ideas include:
 1. Identify employers that employ, or have employed individuals using supports
 2. Expand avenues for non-traditional employment supports
 3. Communicate value of I/DD population in the workforce to employers
- Increase assistive technology and remote supports
The change ideas include:
 1. Staff training and support
 2. Support for individuals and families
 3. Improve access to AT & remote supports
- Strengthen exiting and develop new community connection opportunities for individuals who receive support
The change ideas include:
 1. Support people to identify and strengthen natural supports in their communities
 2. Identify and expand opportunities for individuals to engage in community events and activities
- Provide strategic financial support to providers

Deloitte also provided numerous change activities to the committee that would assist in achieving each change idea.

This presentation was well received by committee members as comprehensive and appreciated that the alternative options were included in the report.

McDowell Communications Presentation- Maura Fitzgerald presented the communication report. She presented the STEP logo to the committee members; the color scheme is deliberately picked so people with color blindness issues can see it. They continue to work on the seven videos. Five have been shot and are moving into editing and post production. The two videos to be produced are the employment and the self-direction videos. Developing informational one-pagers to accompany each of the videos. McDowell is also working on a STEP landing page that will be on the DDS website. It will contain easy to find information for individuals and families and anyone else looking for this information.

Peter updated the committee on the Appendix K that DDS is amending. A public hearing is in May and once completed it will go to CMS for approval. Changes to Appendix K would include incentives for the following:

- Reimbursement for providers submitting a plan
- Provide outcome payment to day provider moving from a congregate to a non-congregate setting
- Restructure a residential setting to support new individuals with specialized behavioral or medical needs
- Restructure a day program that will focus more on employment-based services
- Restructure a day program that will support new individuals with specialized or complex medical needs
- Ending the sub-minimum wage in one of their programs
- Looking to incentivizing agencies that complete the national core indicators
- Incentivizing training in assistive technology and employment for everyone that completes the training

Rewarding work redesigned website was delayed, the new site should be operational shortly

Four different types of notice of opportunities for assistive technologies are now available

A non- project-based housing grant closed about two weeks ago and DDS received several proposals

A committee has been working on revisions to the rent subsidy and have proposed several changes

The next meeting is scheduled for April 18, 2023, at 1:30pm.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Evarts/Simon