



State of Connecticut  
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont  
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff  
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo  
Deputy Commissioner

**DRAFT Minutes of June 20, 2023, ARPA Advisory Committee Meeting**

Location: Meeting held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Peter Mason, Keith Lavalette, Tracey Walker, Cheryl Ellis, Shannon Jacovino, Barry Simon, Greg McMahon, Kathleen Stauffer, Kate Haaland, Brian Smith, Katie Banzhaf, Melissa Kremmel, Win Evarts, Michael Beloff, Lauren Gray  
Deloitte attendance- Julia Oak,

Absent: Paige Librandi,

Peter Mason, Chair, called the meeting to order

Peter Mason read the Public Meeting Requirements

Minutes of the 5/16/2023 Advisory Committee meeting were approved on a motion by Simon/Stauffer

**Update from Committee co-chairs**

**Residential Transformational Committee-** The Residential Committee cancelled their meeting and rescheduled it for July 13, 2023.

**Day Transformational Committee-** The Day Committee met on June 12<sup>th</sup> and Trever Rogers gave an update on the SELN Commission. The National SELN did a review of CT employment services to achieve the goal of increased competitive employment. Organized by strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations. DDS organized work groups to address the findings and recommendations. Addressed financial incentives, significant training and outreach, develop marketing materials and forming a transportation work group. DDS is developing a final report with a review of the final set of recommendations. DDS will share the final recommendations at the next ARPA day committee meeting.

Deloitte provided an update, six approval letters were sent last week confirming that the agency proposals were accepted. Training is being provided for both providers and DDS staff during the month of June.

Lauren Gray provided an update on Marketing, newsletters, and website updates on the seven supports.

**Individual and Family Committee** - The committee met on June 5<sup>th</sup>. Communication updates were provided by Lauren Gray. The committee reviewed the final product of the one-pagers fact sheets which are now on the DDS STEP web page. Patricia Cymbala provided updates on all the AT initiatives including the grant programs, the upcoming AT conference, the NOO's and all the other efforts for Assistive Technology. Next steps include summarizing some of the outreach initiatives to see where the committee is and what other outreach would be helpful for individuals and families.

**DDS Engagement Committee-** This committee is starting to receive a lot of positive feedback around messaging regarding STEP and people are now feeling more educated and more knowledgeable on what the STEP initiative is now. Had one case manager walk thru an exercise of connecting with one of the service components of the STEP initiative to provide the hands-on opportunity for staff.

**Deloitte Presentation:** Julia shared That Deloitte had the first set of STEP trainings on June 14<sup>th</sup>. One session for providers and one session for DDS staff. Two more sessions will be provided next week. So far the evaluations have been really successful from the evaluations provided at the end of the sessions. For the provider session there were 62 attendees and for the DDS session there were about 90 attendees. 81 providers are registered for session 2 and 51 for session 3. DDS is managing the registrations for the DDS staff sessions. DDS leadership is working on implementation planning for the STEP plan and has assigned owners and built out some timelines for the actual implementation.

**Communications Presentation-** Lauren Gray presented the communication report. She showed the committee the provider gateway under STEP and provider documents. It provides links to register for trainings and will add a new sections that will have recorded trainings and presentation slides. She also updated the committee on the STEP webpage at [ct.gov/step](http://ct.gov/step) and the seven core supports were added last week so people could view these fact sheets. They will be provided in both English and Spanish. All the newsletters and overall step informational fact sheet are included on the STEP webpage. The DDS social media pages are also regularly updated. The AT conference is this Thursday is sold out at 250 people and it includes a very good agenda with numerous breakout sessions. Encouraged everyone to learn more about AT and me to assist individuals by giving them a backpack full of technology equipment. Hoping to have all the informational videos released in August. Encouraged everyone to sign up for the monthly e-mail updates.

**DDS Update:**

Peter discussed having 12 providers that have been approved with transition plans in phase 1. 4 providers from each region have been approved. Totals include 84 individuals transitioning in day programs and 32 individuals in residential. The total reserve for the incentives is 6.7 million. The target was to have 200 people move from day congregate settings and 100 from congregate residential settings and we currently are at 84 people in day or 42% of the goal and 32 people or 32% of the residential goal with the total commitment that represents approximately 27% of the goal.

Working on a training for DDS licensing, Quality Assurance and Abuse and Neglect liaisons as we want to make sure that everyone understands that providing more creative and transitional activities that if staff are supposed to be there 24 hours but individuals are now using assistive technology that they do not receive an abuse and neglect claim. The non-project based supportive housing grant had three agencies that received awards. The department is now working with these agencies on how it will work. The Rewarding work website is up and running.

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