



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo
Deputy Commissioner

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Engagement Committee
June 14 Meeting Minutes**

Location: Meeting Held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Cres Secchiaroli Co-Chair, Princess Russell-Raynor, Marina Derman; Shannon McCormick; Claudine Testani; Deloitte Lauren Gray, Wayne Seidel, Sherri Knightly,

Absent: Kevin Bronson, Gunnar Abrahamsson; Dawn DeMatteo; Peter Mason; Marina Derman, (Betsy Bella, Julia Oak), McDowell (Maura Fitzgerald);

Call to Order:

Co-Chair, calls the meeting to order at 11:05AM

Discussion Topics:

1) Princess Russell-Raynor (ARPA Update)

- a) Princess Russell-Raynor shared some of the feedback on the messaging surrounding STEP (Supporting Transformation to Empower People). Princess Russell-Raynor noted that moving forward families will be able to reach out to their respective case managers who will be better informed on the specifics involving STEP as the initiative continues to grow.
- b) DDS continues to work on getting staff and providers trained on the specifics of the STEP initiative, there are various training sessions being hosted by Deloitte Consulting Group in the month of June. The trainings will hone in on key components of the initiative and allow for question and answer
- c) There are currently 7 approved provider transition plans, with 6 others in process.
- d) One-pagers that outline and highlight the 7 featured service options embedded in STEP have been completed and are ready for distribution and posting to the website. There are also corresponding videos that highlight individuals and families that currently utilize these service, they are also in various steps of the completion process.

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2) Lauren Gray - McDowell Communications update

- a) The STEP website page is being updated (ct.gov/STEP). Lauren Gray provided an overview of the STEP webpage, its features, and how to navigate it to find information and fact sheets on the 7 core supports.
- b) Lauren Gray reviewed where the May STEP Into Innovation Forum recordings and information are located on the website.
- c) The agency continues to push for individuals, families, and staff to sign up through the website for e-updates. Currently the agency has 1,100+ signed up to receive correspondence via this method from DDS. DDS is currently sending out reminders for folks to sign up for e-updates on a monthly basis. The agency plans to reduce the number of mailings next fiscal year and is looking to transfer to e-updates to bridge the communication gap with individuals and families.
- d) There are plans to host an additional round of commissioner lead forums in the month of September. More information as it relates to the forums will be released in the upcoming newsletters.

3) Wayne Seidel – Case Management Update

- a. Wayne Seidel informed the group that he has received positive feedback from some case managers and other staff on the rollout of STEP training and information. There were a few instances where case managers did not believe that the messaging was as effective as it could be.
 - b. At the last Case Management Supervisor meeting there was discussion on STEP communications, review of helpful materials, and time for questions which Communications and Legislative Manager Lauren Gray along with Director of Case Management Wayne Seidel helped to field. One supervisor walked the team through an exercise of connecting an individual on a case load with a service component in the STEP initiative.
- 4) A motion to adjourn was made at 11:58PM by Wayne Seidel and seconded by Regional Director Cres Secchiaroli. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be 12 July at 11:00AM.