



Jodi M. Rell
Governor

Minutes ~ October 16, 2008

Members In Attendance:

Jennifer Carroll - Chair, Lou Richards – Vice Chair, Jack Frost – Secretary, John Pelegano, Kevin Morey, Jim Heffernan, Carlos Colon, Patrick Vingo, Peter H. O’Meara - Ex-Officio

DDS Staff:

Kathryn du Pree – Deputy Commissioner
Christine Pollio – Legislative & Executive Affairs Director
Ed Mambruno – Ombudsperson
Michael Woodson – Director of Investigations
Rod O’Connor – Legislative Liaison
Ivette DeJesus – Executive Secretary

Jennifer Carroll- Chair opened the meeting.

Public Participation:

None.

Minutes:

The September Council minutes were approved.

Meeting was held at Southbury Training School after Council toured the facility:

- Ms. Carroll introduced herself. She also thanked Mr. Gorst and staff for hospitality.
- Following Ms. Carroll, everyone in the room introduced themselves.
- A few members of the West Region Advisory Council also attended the meeting at Southbury.

Ombudsperson Report – Ed Mambruno:

Mr. Mambruno informed the Council of the following updates:

- A mother called regarding her son. She was questioning why he was incarcerated after an incident with the driver of a bus that transported him to and from his work program. The mother speaks very little English and states that she was not fully informed or aware of the legal issues since no one from DDS spoke to her regarding her son’s legal options. She believes the department did not do enough for her son and herself in explaining his rights because of the language barrier. Mr. Mambruno spoke to the region; they stated that there is very little they could have done to keep him out of prison. He had an altercation with an elderly person who pressed charges. Mr. Mambruno questioned

whether the warden had a prison employee to assess whether the individual needed to be in a protected environment and he was told that he did not require that.

- Mr. Mambruno spoke with a father who takes care of a very challenging child with behavioral issues at home. He had received a one-time grant of \$4,999 from the region. After he used the money he received a letter stating that he had not used the funds correctly and thus was required to reimburse the region the full amount. He agreed with some of that assessment but questioned some expenses because he was told by the case manager what the grant could be used for and thought they were acceptable. Mr. Mambruno contacted the region for a better understanding of what the funds could be used for, noting that maybe an itemization of all the funds would show that he may be able to keep some of the funding. Mr. Mambruno also suggested that he meet with the case manager, ARD and program manager to go over his child's needs, specifically what he used the money for and what he was trying to achieve. Before any further research into the situation, the father reimbursed the region the full amount of the grant as requested in the letter from the region.
- Mr. Mambruno received a call from a mother regarding placement choices. She was apprehensive to place her child in a facility proposed by the region. She believes placement in Massachusetts would be more appropriate due to the fact that he had resided there before. She thought they would refuse to take her child because they knew his behavior was challenging. She is worried that the facility in Connecticut won't have the appropriate behavioral model and staff. After a lengthy discussion with the mother, it was determined that the reason she did not want to place her son at the one chosen by the region was because of an unfortunate occurrence at the facility a number of years ago. Ed spoke with the Central Office psychologist and asked how the programs and staff matched up to the facility in Massachusetts. Dr. Zuckerman stated that the facility in Connecticut was more than capable of providing the behavioral programs and care for her son. Mr. Mambruno spoke with the mother and explained how facilities change due to the turnover and how one unfortunate instance can ruin a good facility's reputation. She was pleased with the information because she wanted to have her son closer to her so that she could visit more often.

SNF Updates:

By the end of October 1, 2008 all North Region individuals who reside in a nursing home and who have not been visited in the last six months, will get a visit from their Case Manager per Dr. John Houchin, N.R. Regional Director. The CM will also insure that e-CAMRIS and records are updated and accurate.

Recommendations for SNFs:

- Improving communication when an individual at an SNF becomes hospitalized.
- Communication when a death occurs between hospitals, SNFs, Case Manager, and the OBRA liaison.
- Long Term Case Managers improving communication and documentation of visits.
- Developing an OBRA file, assigning a Case Manager and doing follow-ups.
- Initial visits are critical and should occur early so that day programs can be assessed for appropriate consumers.

- Also, each LTC facility has patient care conferences. DDS Case Managers should visit the site and meet the consumer and the social worker. Case managers should make every attempt to attend the initial care conference. If the case managers are unable to attend they should contact the social worker and get updates and place these updates in the consumers' files.
- If the case manager has more than one individual at that nursing home the meetings can be scheduled all for the same day.
- Case Managers should sign and date each chart when a visit is made.

Legislative Report - Christine Pollio:

Ms. Pollio informed the Council of the following updates:

- The Program Review Committee did hear briefing and public hearing on the Aging Needs study (materials are available on the General Assembly website). Findings and recommendations will be available in December. The DDS testimony has been posted on the DDS legislative affairs webpage.
- Our non-budgetary proposals were submitted to the Governor's office and OPM. (9 proposals were submitted)
- Reminder: Session starts January 7, 2009
- Election Day: November 4th
- There should be the state house and senate election results by the next Council meeting, which will be shared. Christine and Rod will have a complete list out to the Council with contact information and committee assignment information as soon as the information becomes available.

Commissioner's Updates:

- Commissioner O'Meara thanked everyone for coming to Southbury. He also gave a big thank you to Donna and her crew for the delicious food.
- He discussed the budget. He informed the Council that the budget ended in a small surplus at the end of June. However, the state forecasted a \$300 million deficit for this fiscal year in September. It is hoped this is being addressed through rescissions and by significant revenue for DDS programs due to retrospective rate adjustments. The rainy day fund has not been touched.
- The Governor is due to report to Legislation soon.
- There are lots of cuts, freeze in employment, freeze in training and so on.
- DDS was levied \$8 million in rescissions in the last few weeks.
- The department is starting to prepare for the fiscal year 2010-2011.
- The department is also working on reconfiguring \$96 million in reductions, which represents 10% of our budget as directed by the Governor.
- Reduction plans accepted for FY' 10/ 11 won't be out until the end of January. You will probably know at the same time the department finds out.
- He shared that the department is in for some challenging times and that we have been here before and he is confident that we will get through this.
- He discussed how there has been no decision about an ERIP, although discussions have occurred. If it is decided to do an ERIP, there will be a serious impact on the department given the age of our workforce.
- There was a great meeting held with the Dean of UCONN about increasing the number of nurses in our field. There will be 6 to 8 college stipends for college nursing students who commit to working for a set number of years for either DDS or providers. The Dept. of Public

Health is doing a survey on existing registered nurses who aren't currently working to find out if they would like to work for a social service agency.

- The Council on Developmental Services and the Advisory Councils are very important and very much needed especially during these trying times.
- Ms. Carroll thanked the Commissioner for all his leadership.

Old Business:

N/A

New Business:

- The Council discussed holding a meeting at STS once a year
- Cpt. Woodson invited the Council to attend the Investigation Training that will start early December. He will give Ivette the information to send to the Council.

****The next meeting will be held on November 13, 2008.****

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned: 7:45 p.m.