

DDS North Region Regional Advisory Council

September 16, 2020

Meeting Minutes – Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Richard Rothstein, Chair; Donna Clauson; Donna Cohen; Ellyn Little; Kim Little; Mary Lou O'Connor; Lori Sandora; Annette Scully; Tammy and Andy Selinger; Elisa Velardo, DDS North Regional Director

Guests: Pat Stavola

Meeting was called to order at 5:07pm and began with Chairperson Rick Rothstein asking members to observe a moment of silence for all those affected by Covid-19.

Elisa Velardo stated that Collette and Ron Langner have decided to retire from the Council after the last meeting. She thanked them for their time and commitment and wished them well.

Regional Director's Update – Elisa Velardo

- Elisa stated that Connecticut continues to maintain. While there has been some fluctuation, it has allowed us to start reopening planfully.
- Respite – Respite was closed in March and reopened in July at 50% with a lot of planning, using PPE and cleaning procedures. Statewide there are 11 respite centers, each with a normal capacity of 6. They have reopened with a capacity of 3 (50%) and it has gone very well. They have been hosting guests for about a month now across the state. Nine of the eleven are open, the other two are not because staff are supporting programs elsewhere. Programs run Thursday through Monday and response has been all positive. Beginning in February they should go to 4 guests (75%), however, bedrooms will not be shared. The focus has been on activities that happen within the centers such as arts, assistive technology, craft projects, etc., and many outdoor activities. All has gone very well and has been very positive.
- Reopening of Day Programs – This also started in July with 50% capacity. Programs had to submit a reopening plan and report how they would be doing social distancing. There has been a lot of attention to setting up space so that buildings would be safe, as well as vehicles. Capacity will also begin at 50%. Team meetings are being held. Phase 3 is scheduled for November 1st as CT numbers have remained stable. Providers statewide are meeting to review how things are going and what is working, as well as how to safely increase the capacity slowly. Teams identified those who were ready to return in the first phase. Phase 2 has also been identified and will begin with 75%. Phase 3 people are those that may need some more time based on their needs, i.e. those that cannot tolerate masks, etc.
- Elisa explained what was happening for those who were in CLAs that had left the CLA and have not returned. Letters will be sent out to families that are affected.
- There have been some issues with Day Programs in some cases because there is no transportation to get there. Families in that situation should contact the case manager and request help regarding transportation if the person is ready to return to the program. Transportation issues are being worked on through the team process.
- Covid numbers at day programs have been very low, however, there have been a few cases which have been able to be addressed quickly and contained.

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- Elisa shared an invitation from Ken Cabral from the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) looking for family members of individuals 25 years old or younger, not currently receiving services but who may in the future. They are asking people to share with others that may be interested. To be held on October 3rd from 1:00-2:30 online. Amber Burke is the contact.
- Elisa stated that she will schedule a virtual tour on a Wednesday with Amy Blazawski at one of our Respite Centers to demonstrate the Assistive Technology that has been installed and being used there.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 5:00pm by virtual teleconference.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Neumann

Executive Secretary