

**DDS North Region**  
**Regional Advisory Council**

May 19, 2021

Meeting Minutes – Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

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Members Present: Kathleen Hayes, Chair; Annette Scully, Vice Chair; Donna Cohen; Ellyn Little; Kim Little; Mary Lou O'Connor; Lori Sandora; Tammy Selinger; Elisa Velardo, DDS North Regional Director

Guests: Melissa Cruz, Kevin Bronson (DDS); Jennifer Bundy (DDS); Greg Lawton (DDS); Susan Paul (DDS)

Meeting called to order at 5:05pm.

- Transition Advisor/Camp Q Presentation – Jennifer Bundy/Greg Lawton/Sue Paul
  - Elisa Velardo introduced Jennifer Bundy who is one of the Region's Transition Advisors located out of the Newington Office. Jennifer shared a brief presentation regarding the role of the Transition Advisors in the North Region. Greg Lawton, Program Manager, as well as Sue Paul, Transition Supervisor, were also in attendance to answer any questions.
  - Sue Paul, who is also the Camp Q Administrator, shared information about Camp Quinebaug, located in Danielson. There are 120 campers that attend each season. There are three 2-week sessions. Information was shared about registration and some photos of Camp were shared. Greg Lawton also shared that Camp Harkness is also available in the South Region which is open to anyone with any type of disability. The Helping Hands of Camp Q is very involved with fundraising and hold a lot of fun activities.
- Introduction of Kevin Bronson, DDS Dir. of Legislative & Executive Affairs
  - Elisa introduced Kevin Bronson, who is now in the role formerly held by Krista Ostaszewski. Kevin came from a political background and worked with Denise Merrill. He is works with Communications and is the Legislative Liaison for DDS.
- Legislative Update –
  - SB 416 – gives DAS access to the A/N registry
  - PCA Bills regarding payroll – in session in House and Senate; OPM working with unions on some changes; should be getting more information soon.
  - Budget is out – The Governor put out budget in February; Appropriations just voted; hopefully there will be some good news by the end of the session.
  - If anyone has any questions, Kevin can be contacted by email at [Kevin.Bronson@ct.gov](mailto:Kevin.Bronson@ct.gov).
  - Kevin was asked if the updates that were previously shared by Rod O'Connor could continue to be shared. Kevin will follow up.
- Regional Director's Update – Elisa Velardo
  - Covid-related Activities –
    - Elisa shared that there has been good news, the update on new cases has virtually been "0". The second dose vaccination clinics for the Pfizer vaccine were held across the state which went very smoothly. Hartford Healthcare was very accommodating and helpful.
    - There are questions because numbers are down and there have been changes with mask mandates. Procedures are in process of being updated; re-assessing so people can return to services as safely as possible.
  - Six providers were noticed with strike activity which would start on Friday at 6am. Monitoring is being put in place to ensure all locations are safe.
  - Camp Q is getting ready to begin.
  - Preparing for new Grads and assigning case managers.
  - RFP to be issued in the New Haven area for people coming out of correctional facilities, which has been a difficult population serve for DDS. It will be a transitional program for people with DD; will start with three people but then it may increase. It will be for people to transition to long-term supports.

- It was agreed that the minutes from each meeting would be reviewed. Claudia will send with meeting reminders so they can be reviewed, and they will be approved at each meeting.
- Please email suggestions for any presentations or topics for future meetings.
- Open Participation – there were no comments.

A motion for adjournment was made and seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm.

There are no meetings scheduled for June, July, or August. The next meeting will be held in September 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

*Claudia Neumann*

Executive Secretary