

**DDS-West Region
Advisory Council Minutes
April 3, 2014**

Members Present - Gil Kellersman, Mickey Herbst, Cindy Stramandinoli, Arlene Steinfeld
DDS – Shannon O'Brien, Beth Aura Miller, Tammy Garris

Call to Order – Chair Herbst called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Citizen Comments

- **Approval of Minutes** – Review ensued of the January 23, 2014 meeting minutes.
In the presence of a quorum, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the September meeting as presented to the meeting.

New Business

- **Regional Director Announcements;** *Shannon O'Brien, Assistant Regional Director, Private Division (for Fritz Gorst)*
 - Ms. O'Brien informed the Council on the upcoming DDS Spring Resource Fair which is scheduled for Tuesday, April 29, 2014 at Newtown High School from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The fair will consist of community vendors and state agencies. Information regarding the following will be available:
 - DDS Supports and Services
 - Employment/Day Services; Recreation
 - Residential supports
 - Community Companion Homes
 - Self-Advocacy
 - Home Health Services
 - Families Helping Families
 - State & Federal Benefits
 - Each DDS State Regional Advisory Council has a goal that they are working on; the West Region Advisory Council deferred discussion on their respite project until all board members are present.
 - Ms. O'Brien also updated the Council on the Arc Connecticut Families for Families Campaign. The Council stressed the importance of lobbying to legislators on the need for funding for families with loved ones with intellectual disabilities.
 - Council member, Cindy Stramandinoli, informed the Council on her experience at the CT Caucus in Hartford. The group "DDS Connecticut Families Can't Wait" was one of many groups present at the caucus to advocate. Each family had three minutes to tell their story to the lawmakers; this was very moving. After the two hour meeting, the entire group went to see several legislators. The goal is for these groups to be up in Hartford every Wednesday until the legislative session is over and advocate for the consumers and their families. Families have been very involved with the legislators, governor, and lawmakers by inviting them to their homes, attending meetings, calling their offices, etc.
- Commissioner Macy has officially nominated four new Advisory Council members and letters have been sent to each one of them. The new members are:
 - Trish Butler
 - Chuck Bergamo
 - Corrine Tartaglia
 - Karleen Craddock
- Email will be sent out regarding availability for next meeting to see if members prefer evenings at 6:00 p.m. or early meetings and which location.
- Ms. O'Brien updated the Council on STS RFPs and consumers that have moved and consumers identified as interested in moving.

- Councilmen Herbst informed the Council on private hires having received a letter from Unions about joining. Per Beth Aura Miller, DDS has been in negotiations with them for over a year regarding private hires to see how to make this work and come to an agreement. Two members of the PCA committee are Sheila Mulvey and Carl Knoll. We are awaiting the legislator’s vote on the proposals to move forward.

Planning and Resource Allocation Team (PRAT) Process; Tammy Garris, PRAT Manager

- Ms. Garris distributed Funding Guidelines and LON Summary documents which are the two tools used in determining funding allocation.

She went on to explain that PRAT is a Regional Team chaired by the PRAT and Waiver Manager, and comprised of regional representatives. The Team manages the process whereby DDS identifies available resources, identifies individual consumer needs, assigns priority, implements Planning and Resource Allocation policies and procedures, makes recommendations regarding applicants for the HCBS waiver, processes allocation of resources, and referrals to available out-of-home residential group living settings. The PRAT evaluates needs based on health and safety reasons. All funds are distributed according to the individual’s Level of Need.

- No family members attend PRAT; the DDS members are:
 - Donna Josephson
 - Beth Aura Miller
 - Shannon O’Brien
 - Sharon O’Neill
 - Denise Paladino

This is consistent across the Regions

- Ms. Garris also gave an explanation of URR and its purpose. Each DDS region has a Utilization Resource Review Committee that:
 - reviews all initial requests for intensive staffing.
 - reviews budget requests that exceed the DDS funding limits.
 - monitors extensive staffing situations that are medically/behaviorally required. All individuals with intensive staffing will have programs to address the need for such staffing levels, with data kept to document success or problems, behavioral plan, staffing plans including titration plans. Programs will include activities that engage the individual proactively in accordance with his or her needs.
- She also spoke about Enhanced Family Support (EFS) funds which is no longer available, but greatly helps families that only needed a limited amount of support.

Adaptive Technology; Beth Aura Miller, Self Determination Director

- Ms. Miller informed the Council on how the Self Determination Directors have been working with the DD Council who has been given a grant for exploring how iPads can be used for employment. A pilot has been put together to see for three agencies statewide to explore the use of iPads for employment. The intent of the pilot is to use the iPad to decrease staffing so that the person would have independence instead of a staff by his/her side. The iPad would become their technology support. NEAT Market is assisting in the oversight of the grant/pilot.

Fifteen agencies around the state applied for the grant out of which three were selected to receive it. Each agency was responsible for producing a huge amount of work to prove they were worthy of receiving this grant since we are giving them iPads as well as full assistance of technology assessments for each of the 5 individuals in each of the 3 agencies using the IPAD. The three agencies include: North Region – Willa; South Region - Futures. Inc., and West Region - Community Systems, Inc. These three agencies have a commitment to attend several different trainings over the next several months and support the five individuals identified in their agency that will utilize the IPAD as a work support.

Ms. Miller distributed a “Tips and Tricks” sheet that can be used with the IPAD.

The DDS Waiver does support the purchase of IPADS for individuals who self-direct and use the device to increase independence.

- Aging Conference in May will be showing all different technology that can be used for safety.

Committee discussed EFS funding Chairperson Herbst states this is a possible goal for the Committee to work on as far as advocacy purposes.

Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6: 30 p.m.

Minutes Recorded by:

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