



State of Connecticut  
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont  
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff  
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo  
Deputy Commissioner

**DRAFT Minutes of May 16, 2023, ARPA Advisory Committee Meeting**

Location: Meeting held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Peter Mason, Keith Lavalette, Tracey Walker, Cheryl Ellis, Shannon Jacovino, Barry Simon, Greg McMahon, Kathleen Stauffer, Kate Haaland, Brian Smith, Katie Banzhaf, Melissa Kremmel, Win Evarts, Michael Beloff, Lauren Gray  
Deloitte attendance- Betsy Bella,  
McDowell Attendance- Rebecca Brockway

Absent: Paige Librandi,

Tracey Walker, Chair, called the meeting to order

Tracey Walker read the Public Meeting Requirements

Minutes of the 4/18/2023 Advisory Committee meeting were approved on a motion by Simon/Evarts.

**Update from Committee co-chairs**

**Residential Transformational Committee-** The committee reviewed the FAQ's, they are close to being completed. The committee was updated by both Deloitte and McDowell. The residential committee have now moved to a once per month schedule and the next meeting will take place on May 25.

**Day Transformational Committee-** The Day Committee met and had both Deloitte and McDowell present. On the communication update they developed a flyer that was sent to individuals and families announcing the community forums that the commissioner is sponsoring in May, they are producing a transformational newsletter to be sent in June and they discussed the videos that are in the final production stage. On the Deloitte side we have 15 transformation plans that have been received. They have revised the templates which are now on the website. The day committee discussed the approval process for these plans and also discussed the FAQ which were approved by the day committee.

**DDS Engagement Committee-** The committee met on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Discussed the STEP program and their descriptions, McDowell discussed the videos and Deloitte discussed the training sessions and the informational sessions on STEP. The Assistive Technology Director gave an update on assistive technology and discussed the conference that is coming on June 22<sup>nd</sup> working jointly with the Department of Aging and Disability Services.

**Individual and Family Committee-** This committee had updates from both Deloitte and McDowell. Reviewing the one pager's that will be used in conjunction with the videos. These will assist families with some simple guidance on what services are out there with the benefits and challenges. The committee has completed their review of these one pagers.

Phone: 860 418-6000 ♦ TDD 860 418-6079 ♦ Fax: 860 418-6001  
460 Capitol Avenue ♦ Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
[www.ct.gov/dds](http://www.ct.gov/dds) ♦ e-mail: [ddsct.co@ct.gov](mailto:ddsct.co@ct.gov)  
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**Deloitte Presentation:** Betsy shared the transformational options that support STEP and informed the committee that DDS has assigned owners of each of these options and Deloitte will work with the owners to develop an implementation plan. Informational sessions are happening right now and they provide overviews of STEP especially focus on some of the activities about what DDS is doing with the incentives so people can have a better understanding of the opportunities and their roles in STEP. Discussed more of the role of case management and their role within STEP and dealing with Individuals, Families and Providers. Resource management is actually reviewing the plans and will be helping coordinate with DDS and then with the providers. Deloitte is providing training sessions next month. There will be three training sessions for DDS staff and three training sessions for providers. The plan is for the topics to focus on what's the next step. A training will be held for the reviewers of the plans on the revised plan templates and to make sure providers have the flexibility to move forward with their plans. A session for DDS staff so the message can be heard and understood across the organization. On the provider side a session on strategic planning and innovated approaches to help providers meet their goal based on the individuals they support. Two sessions are also planned, one for day and one for residential services that focus on creating a transition plan. A provider newsletter supplement will also be sent out to providers electronically that will have additional information and resources that will target them. Peter discussed the plan approval process and the approval letter for providers. A discussion about the diverse population to be considered during the applications and it was decided that the plans needed to be streamlined to create simplicity and that many providers in phase 1 did not know who was going to transition in the early stages which would make it difficult to collect demographic information to ensure diversity. It was felt there could be an opportunity of the review process for diversity on the back end of the process.

**McDowell Communications Presentation-** Rebecca Brockway presented the communication report. The one pagers are in process right now and are almost finalized they will go along with the seven videos that have been created. Have also developed a 2 pager on STEP for individuals and families which is up on the website. The pictures on the one pagers were taken from the video shoots. All the 1 pagers were developed with the help of the individual and family committee over the past couple of months. The idea of the 1 pager is to break it down into easy to understand language so that everyone can understand what DDS is talking about. Discussion about having separate 1 pagers to discuss how funding works, how the emergency system works, who gets funding and other key questions that many families need for their long-term planning process. The committee saw the video on supportive housing which is almost complete. A flyer went out for the May informational forums which is also on the website. The next newsletter is going out the first week of June included in the newsletter will be a letter from the commissioner discussing STEP, a section for providers and July and August upcoming events.

#### **DDS Approval letter**

Peter discussed the draft approval letter for providers submitting transitional plans. The letter is an understanding between the department and the provider on what we are agreed upon. It will give a summary of how many people will be moving and what kinds of moves that they are making, the number of people who are transitioning and when the first person moves and when the last person is scheduled to move. It will have the maximum incentives and if any one-times are included.

The revised Appendix K has been submitted to CMS and the budget templates will include additional incentives if they are approved by CMS. These extra incentives have been placed in the background of the new budget templates.

The ARPA incentives has only so much money and DDS may need to develop a waiting list as providers are going through their plans. If we are looking at a provider who is behind in their plans a discussion may happen with the providers if they are unable to complete the transition plan. If providers are doing what they said there would not be an issue. DDS will need to develop a tracking system to make sure we spend as much as we can. Discussion ensued about the creativity and how it fits into our current system.

DDS has hired a university fellow, she is splitting her time between DDS and DAS and will work 20 hours per week. She will be working with the leads of all the initiatives to make sure we have the outcomes and the data that shows all the things we have completed. She will be looking at how the money the providers received has been used and looking at best practices.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 20, 2023, at 1:30pm.  
The meeting was adjourned by a motion by Simon/Banzhaf