



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Council on Developmental Services

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner
Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

Minutes of January 18, 2018

Location: Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Central Office, Conference Room A

In attendance: Adrienne Benjamin, Chair; Kevin Zingler, Vice Chair; Pamela DonAroma; Joseph Duffy; Karen Hlavac, (via phone); Rick Lenz; Diana Mennone; Dr. Neil Stein; Deborah Ullman

Absent: Lisa Weisinger-Roland; Jamie Lazaroff, Secretary; Arlene Reith

Staff: Margaret Castonguay, Executive Secretary; Peter Mason, Deputy Commissioner; Jordan Scheff, Commissioner

Introductions

Chair, Adrienne Benjamin, called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

Public Participation

Faye Lenz, Dawn Odour, Rick Rothstein, Stan Soby

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the December meeting were approved

Topics for Discussion

Chairperson, Adrienne Benjamin, Update

Ms. Benjamin spoke to the Council about The Arc's 5th Annual Connecticut IDD Caucus Family Hearing Day on February 21 at the Legislative Office Building from 10:30 to 12:30. Ms. Benjamin would like the Council to participate and thank the legislature for funding the day program and trying to save the Medicare Savings Program, as well as, trying to encourage support for the Community First Choice (CFC) program. Ms. Benjamin will prepare a statement to be edited by Council members Deb Ullman and Rick Lenz which will be presented to the legislature on Family Hearing Day.

At the February Council meeting, there is no official guest so Ms. Benjamin would like to have a discussion on Level of Need (LON) information in order to have a unified dialogue to present to the legislature. The Commissioner and his staff are working on the complicated data points for discussion.

Presentation

Steve Morris, executive director of The Arc of Farmington Valley, Inc. (Favarh) presented to the Council on Project SEARCH and supporting its expansion beyond central Connecticut to the rest of the state. The Council discussed the presentation with the Commissioner and Mr. Morris.

Commissioner, Jordan Scheff

The Commissioner spoke to the Council on two media stories in which DDS has been in the news lately. Locally, a story about an individual in a Connecticut hospital emergency room and nationally, National Public Radio (NPR), is finishing up a two week series on abuse and neglect with a specific focus on sexual abuse of people with disabilities.

The Commissioner has proactively reached out to some hospital executives to work with DDS and meet with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to talk about the situations in hospital emergency rooms and look at the big picture for the best care for our individuals and the way hospitals can bill for treatment. The Commissioner going forward wants to include other hospitals to be part of the conversations working on step-up solutions by collaborating together.

The Commissioner spoke about the Office of Inspector General (OIG) report he forwarded to the Council. The OIG, Administration on Community Living and Office for Civil Rights issued a joint report, 'Ensuring Beneficiary Health and Safety in Group Homes Through State Implementation of Comprehensive Compliance Guidelines'. The report speaks about the audit findings of three New England states including Connecticut. For Connecticut, the report talks about the May 2016 OIG Audit Report titled, "CT Did Not Comply with Federal and State Requirements for Critical Incidents Involving Developmentally Disabled Medicaid Beneficiaries". The Commissioner explained the information was not new and the reason the information was released is that Connecticut was one of the first states to be included in national conversations. What the audit initially found was that incident reports are not always coded correctly. DDS worked hard with OIG and Health and Human Services to come up with a corrective action plan for data collection systems that would be electronic for our incident reports.

The Commissioner gave a budget and legislative update stating the legislature will come into session working on how to mitigate the current deficit. The Commissioner was grateful for the graduate funds and worked quickly with families and providers to get people placed. The Commissioner continues to work with OPM on current budget options which are mostly revenue generating but the Commissioner would like to be able to hire new staff to better ensure that people remain Medicaid eligible.

New Business

On-going Council advocacy

Council field trips

- MARC of Manchester - April Council meeting

Council meeting presenters

- Robin Wood
- Scott McWilliams - March Council Meeting
- Win Evarts
- Walt Glomb
- Kendres Lally & Peter Hughes
- Peter Mason, Siobhan Morgan and Robin Wood on CMS Community Living Right Changes 2019
- Steve Morris to present on Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder Housing (IDASH) program
- Dr. Peter Tolisano

Bylaw update and approval

Communication and follow-up with the Governor and the Legislature

Council members spoke about forming a subcommittee on dental care

Waiting List

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.