



State of Connecticut Council on Developmental Services

DDS

APPROVED Minutes of the June 20, 2019 Meeting

Location: 460 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut 06106

In attendance: Adrienne Benjamin; Pamela DonAroma; Joseph Duffy; Christine Hainsworth-Straus; Karen Hlavac, Secretary; Jamie Lazaroff; Diana Mennone; Rick Rothstein; Deborah Ullman; and Lisa Weisinger-Roland, Chair

Absent: Rick Lenz; Dawn Oduor; Arlene Reith; Dr. Neil Stein; and Kevin Zingler, Vice Chair

DDS Staff: Rod O'Connor, Legislative Liaison; Joseph Carvalho, Executive Secretary; Beth Aura Miller, Director of Self-Determination; Dr. Valencia Bagby-Young, DDS Director of Health and Clinical Services; and Dr. Lynn McMunn, Psychologist

Introductions

Lisa Weisinger-Roland, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. Ms. Weisinger-Roland asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to speak.

Public Participation

Stan Soby, Tracy Shelburne

Topics of Discussion

- **Disability and Aging Presentation** Beth Aura Miller, DDS Director of Self-Determination, gave an overview of the department's services for individuals who are aging. DDS has been focusing on aging services since 1980. The March Management Information Report (MIR) showed that 22% of individuals DDS serves were 55 to 75 years of age. The department in using LifeCourse planning and self-direction has made it possible for those persons with intellectual disability to age in their homes in the community. DDS is looking to increase use of assistive technology to keep older adults in their homes. DDS has partnered with the Connecticut Coalition on Aging and Developmental Disabilities (CCADD) and the Departments of Rehabilitation Services and Aging on conferences that address various challenges and solutions for older persons with disabilities.

Ms. Miller discussed the Department of Social Services' (DSS) Money Follows the Person program as well as their Community First Choice (CFC) program. Another focus of DDS's aging services is getting families, who have elder caregivers for older individuals with intellectual disability, the in-home supports that they need so both the caregiver and the individual can remain at home. Ms. Miller also mentioned that with persons with intellectual disability living much longer there are now issues of how and when to retire from jobs and what retirement looks like for these individuals. DDS is looking into various ways that individuals can age safely in place.

- **Nursing/Health Services Presentation on Aging Issues** Dr. Valencia Bagby-Young discussed both health issues that affect older persons with intellectual disability and what preparations should be made to keep older individuals independent but with the right amount of support and guidance. Dr. Bagby-Young stated that it was important for these individuals to continue to get routine preventive care including reproductive and sex-related care.

Dr. Bagby-Young highlighted the types of legal documents, such as Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) orders, end-of-life documents, healthcare proxies, and Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) that should be discussed in advance with each individual. Families and guardians should make sure that end-of-life decision-making is addressed prior to the need for it.

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- Training and Workforce Development for an Aging Population** Dr. Lynn McMunn spoke on the issues of how those departments and agencies that provide services to older adults with disabilities need to provide training to their employees so that they are prepared to provide appropriate care to these adults. She discussed the [National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices \(NTG\)](#) Aging Plan to address aging issues in special needs populations. The [NTG-EDSD Screening Instrument](#) is just one way that NTG works to train employees and other professionals in early detection of dementia and its symptoms. Dr. McMunn highlighted the changes that were implemented in Connecticut based on the passage of [Public Act No. 14-194](#) An Act Concerning the Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Task Force's Recommendations on Training. Specific to DDS, the act requires that “all residential facilities serving persons with Down syndrome fifty years of age or older have at least one staff member trained in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care”.

Karen Hlavac asked if, in screening for dementia, did the physicians screen for comorbidities such as leukemia? Dr. McMunn said that physicians needed ongoing training to look for various causes of poor mental functioning especially in those adults with disabilities. Dr. McMunn suggested that all families compile life stories, both written and video, as a way to help persons with memory challenges to be able to have a baseline personal history. She also encouraged individuals and families to have files with healthcare information and legal documents so that that information can be easily accessible in case of an emergency.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the May 2, 2019 Council meeting were approved. The motion for approval was made by Adrienne Benjamin and seconded by Jaime Lazeroff.

Legislative Update

- Rod O'Connor reviewed the process by which Council members who would like to remain on DS Council can be reappointed. Mr. O'Connor then discussed the outcomes of certain pieces of legislation for the 2019 legislative session.

[Public Act No. 19-118 S.B. No. 920](#) An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health's Recommendations for Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes passed. In section 25 of the act it requires that each job applicant who has been made a conditional offer of employment by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) be fingerprinted and submit to both state and national criminal history records checks;

[Public Act No. 19-117 H.B. No. 7424](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2021, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS OF THE BUDGET passed. Section 26 requires that DDS receive 80% reimbursement from private providers when actual expenditures are less than the amount received from the Department in both FY 20 and FY 21. DDS must allow providers to retain 20% of cost settlement funds. Sections 294, 296, 298 and 299 remove DDS community companion homes (CCHs) from the Department of Social Services room and board payment process in anticipation of a newly established rate methodology under DDS;

[H.B. No. 5505](#) An Act Concerning the Updating of State Forms and Applications to Include a Nonbinary Gender Option did not pass. The bill would have required agencies to have a nonbinary option on forms that requested gender which would have complicated compliance with federal standards that do not have this option;

[Public Act No. 19-127 S.B. No. 945](#) An Act Concerning the Innovation Incentive Program for Nonprofit Providers of Human Services passed. The act requires the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to establish a pilot program that provides incentives to qualifying nonprofit human service providers that realize savings in the state-contracted services they deliver. As written, DCF, DDS, and DMHAS providers would be eligible for this pilot program;

[S.B. No. 63](#) An Act Concerning the Establishment of Supported Decision-Making to Assist Persons with Disabilities did not pass. This bill would have authorized adults with disabilities to voluntarily enter into agreements with other adults (“supporters”) for supported decision-making, which is a process of supporting

and accommodating adults with disabilities to enable them to make life decisions without impeding their self-determination. DDS has committed to work on this concept in the off-session with advocates and stakeholders;

S.B. No. 691 An Act Concerning Erasure of Certain Misdemeanor Criminal Records and Expedited Pardons Review for Certain Felony Offenses did not pass. This bill would have established a process to automatically erase (1) certain misdemeanor criminal records and (2) convictions for decriminalized offenses. Specific to persons with disabilities, the bill would have erased the record of any person who was convicted pursuant to section 53-61a, which is assault in the 3rd degree of a person with disabilities, an elderly person or a woman who is pregnant;

H.B. No. 6352 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ZONING OF COMMUNITY RESIDENCES AND CHILDCARE RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES did not pass. This bill would have modified how the distance between certain group homes would be measured under the law that requires such homes to be separated by at least 1,000 feet, unless the local zoning authority waives the requirement;

S.B. No. 372 An Act Concerning the Provision of Resources to Guardians of Adult Children with Intellectual Disability did not pass. It would have required the Department of Social Services (DSS) to apply for any applicable Medicaid state plan amendment, waiver, or waiver amendment to allow guardians or family members of adults with intellectual disability to receive a stipend for providing personal care services to such individuals;

S.B. No. 393 An Act Concerning the Department of Developmental Services' Level of Need Assessment did not pass. The bill as amended would have established a legislative task force to study the Department of Developmental Services' level of need assessment system;

Public Act No. 19-56 S.B. No. 807 An Act Concerning the Legislative Commissioners' Recommendations for Revisions to the Public Health Statutes, Dental Assistants and Dental Therapy passed. Along with making various technical changes to public health-related statutes, this act in section 12 extends by one year, until January 1, 2020, the reporting deadline for the task force on the needs of and services for adults with intellectual disability.

Commissioner's Report

- Commissioner Jordan Scheff discussed the DDS Level-of-Need (LON) assessment bill and clarified that he had met with other agencies on DSS's roll-out of the Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) system and its use of a universal assessment tool. Commissioner Scheff explained that with DSS using both EVV and a universal assessment tool for all waiver services, changes to the DDS LON assessment may be unnecessary because DDS rollout of EVV and universal assessment will be in a year or two. DDS's Step Up/Step Down Unit has had its first official discharge and three individuals are ready to leave the Unit. Once those three individuals finish their transitional plans, three or four more individuals are waiting for placements in the Unit. The commissioner discussed his hope that Connecticut would become a "Technology First" state. This would mean that tech solutions would be used to round out, replace, or enhance an individual's supports. The commissioner has communicated with the Governor's office concerning the potential to improve services and increase independence by adopting a "Tech First" model. The commissioner reported that at the latest NASDDDS meeting, Connecticut was recognized as a leader in addressing aging issues, pay for direct care workers, health and safety issues, technology, and informed planning and person centeredness. The department needs to work on improving cultural competency and is looking to California for ideas on how to improve.

New Business

- None.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

***NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:
July 18, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. at the DDS Central Office***