



Jodi M. Rell
Governor

Minutes ~ July 10, 2008

Members In Attendance:

Patti Silva-Chair, Jennifer Carroll-Vice Chair, Jim Heffernan, Lou Richards, David Hadden, John Pelegano, Jack Frost, Sheila Mulvey, Carlos Colon, Peter H. O'Meara-Ex-Officio

DDS Staff:

Kathryn du Pree – Deputy Commissioner
Ed Mambruno – Ombudsperson
Michael Woodson – Director of Investigations
Rod O'Connor – Legislative Liaison

Patti Silva - Chair opened the meeting.

Public Participation:

Mr. Patrick Johnson attended the Council meeting. He thanked everyone for support in this last legislative session. The impact of zero increase is a significant impact to everyone. CIB is losing staff and having recruitment problems to name a few.

Ms. Sheila Mulvey shared that the Council needs to know that this is a very serious situation as parents rely heavily on Private Providers. She also shared that she is very disappointed to hear that the Governor ordered the Commissioner to do 5% decrease in funding and that she vetoed establishing a cabinet to look into Private Provider issues. The commissioner indicated that the media report about a 5% cut was inaccurate. There has been no rescission of funding for contracted services.

Minutes:

The June Council minutes were approved.

Ombudsperson Report – Ed Mambruno:

Mr. Mambruno informed the Council of the following updates:

- The Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee recently voted to undertake a study of *Planning for Needs of Aging Individuals with Developmental Disabilities*. The study will assess DDS efforts to address and plan for the current and future service needs of the aging population with intellectual disabilities in Connecticut. A copy of the study scope is attached. The committee staff assigned to this project are Michelle Castillo and Maryellen Duffy. Maryellen and Michelle called to discuss the ombudsperson's role and get his perspective on the needs and concerns of this population.

- An individual called the office to request assistance from Mr. Mambruno regarding maintaining their assets; not allowing the state to draw from their trust. The law states that someone who has assets that are not in a special needs trust must pay for his/her services before the State of Connecticut will pay for them. The theory is that the State will pay for anyone who can't pay, not for someone who has the ability to pay for him or herself. The best advice is for her to get a lawyer who is familiar with special needs trusts to protect the consumers' interests.
- A guardian called to complain that the consumer was assigned a case manager who did not speak Spanish. This was compounded by the person temporarily losing Medicaid. Ed called the region and spoke with the case manager supervisor who assigned a new case manager who speaks Spanish. He immediately looked into Medicaid issue and enrolled the person into the waiver. The next step is to find an appropriate day placement.
- Mr. Mambruno spoke with a mother who was very unhappy with the private provider and the specific placement. The mother had several meetings with the Executive Director and the Regional Director regarding safety issues. After several tries to resolve the issue, the mother withdrew the individual from the home. The region is actively seeking appropriate placement.

SNF Visits:

6/23/2008 one consumer at Park Place, Hartford.
 6/23/2008 two consumers at St. Mary's, West Hartford.
 6/25/2008 one consumer at Trinity Hill, Hartford
 6/25/2008 two consumers at Ellis Manor, Hartford
 6/26/2008 two consumers at Walnut Hill in New Britain.
 6/26/2008 two consumers at Bel-Air, Newington.

1. While visiting a consumer at Bel-Air in Newington, Ed discovered an additional DDS consumer who was not listed in e-CAMRIS. The consumer living there was unknown to the department but had correspondence dating back to 1996. Individual had out-of-state contact information and a case manager who has since retired. Ed called the region, spoke with the case manager supervisor and sent all the information to the OBRA nurse for evaluation. He also spoke with a consumer who stated CM has never visited him/her.
2. While visiting a consumer at Ellis Manor in Hartford, Ed asked the administrator if they knew of any other individuals residing there who may have been diagnosed with mental retardation and/or was a consumer of DDS. He was brought to meet an individual who was middle-aged and Spanish speaking (only). Individual had a Spanish speaking case manager who visited them often. Mr. Mambruno asked the administrator if they had been considered for living and in a group home or in the community. He was told that the family was happy that they were there and felt they were safe. Additionally, they had a relative working there who translated and looked out for them. Mr. Mambruno asked the individuals if they would like to move and they stated that they would bring it up with their family.
3. During a routine visit at Trinity Hill Mr. Mambruno found that a consumer had passed away approximately five months ago. Hospital did not contact department or the nursing home. He called the region; the case manager is preparing a death report.

4. He is working with the CO Utilization and Review Nurse to develop a plan of action for better lines of communication between the hospitals, the nursing homes, and the department when a consumer is discharged from the hospital or passes away in the hospital.

5. He spoke with an individual who wanted to leave the nursing home he/she is placed at for a group home. However, due to complications i.e. decubitus ulcers, they needed to follow staff instructions and make all medical appointments. Mr. Mambruno informed them that if they want to move individual they have to make sure appointments are kept.

Legislative Report - Rod O'Connor:

- Mr. O'Connor provided the Council with copies of the 2008 Legislative summary. He highlighted certain areas of interest for them so it is easy to locate. He also shared that the information will be on the DDS website on 7/14/08.
- He discussed the possibility of a Special Session this summer.

Commissioner's Updates:

- A Council member asked the question: how many DDS consumers are in Nursing Homes? The Commissioner replied 370.
- The Commissioner shared that the department has been asked to cut cost on non-essential items. One area of reduction is in gas by 25%. Overall the economic picture is not good, revenue or expenditures.
- Some good news was that, DDS' rescissions was only \$2.5 million in the Personnel (PS) account and did not equal 5%. The holdback in OE will not be given to the department as part of the savings strategy. . We are anticipating saving additional money as a result of the hiring freeze. Direct support, nursing and case management staff is exempt.
- The FY'09 budget still includes service expansion and allows DDS to cover all contractual obligations. There is increasing pressure to monitor spending.
- Preparation for FY'10 budget will start in September.
- Discussion of when Nursing Homes report deaths of DDS consumers to the case manager took place. Regional directors are following up on Ed Mambruno's concerns.
- Peter presented his idea to give scholarships to nursing students for 2-5 years of service to DDS and its providers. The Council likes the concept of a Nurse Scholarship Recruitment program. .
- Dr. Pelegano suggested we possibly partner with Hospital for Special Care.

Old Business:

- There was a discussion at the last meeting regarding sending a letter to all members of the Legislative Committee regarding waivers. Ms. Silva was surprised at the number of people who did not read it.

New Business:

- The Nominating Committee met and has the following nominations: Jennifer Carroll for Chair, Lou Richards for Co-Chair, and Jack Frost as Secretary. Motion to accept was unanimous.
- Ms. Silva thanked the Nominating Committee for their work.
- Ms. Silva wished the new nominees well and shared that she knows they will do well.

- Lou brought up for discussion the STS tour to be held in October. He shared that it is important that Council members that say they will attend, do attend because it entails coordination and planning to make this happen and the last time this was done many people did not attend.
- Dr. Pelegano suggested the idea of giving Patti a certificate of appreciation for her service as chair.
- Ms. Carroll suggested April D'Apolina as a possible Council member.
- Mr. Frost suggested inviting members of Regional Councils to the STS meeting as well.
- The Council voted not to have an August meeting.

****The next meeting will be held on September 11, 2008.****

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned: 8:30 p.m.