

***Regional Advisory & Planning Council***

Meeting Minutes of April 15, 2009

*Members in Attendance:* Nancy Bilyak, Carlos Colon, Florence Guite, John Houchin, John Mullooly, Lorraine Mullooly, Kathleen Perrier

*Guests:* Scott Wolfe, Janis Bouley

Kathleen Perrier, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Meeting minutes of February 25, 2009 were reviewed and accepted with the correction of State Representative Tony Guerera's name on page 2.

***Report from the Quality Council Committee:*** Scott Wolfe shared some of the outcomes of the NCI surveys and identified some areas which should be focused on where improvements could be made.

- The first area was providing information to families – both public and private should work on keeping families better informed. The score regarding case managers sharing information was lower statewide. The whole section of the core indicator regarding interaction with case managers and knowing who the case manager is needs to be looked at. There was discussion regarding agencies having some type of forum to share information with parents. The North Region does hold family forums every year. Scott will be looking at this more with the private agencies. Dr. Houchin also suggested that this group may want to consider inviting parents to come and share information.
- The second area is regarding Self-Advocacy – issues identified were with people who are in need of friendship and people that are feeling lonely. These are areas that need to be worked on. There was discussion regarding the possibility that some agencies may not be encouraging self-advocacy because of the fear of portability, self-determination, etc.
- The third was the area of Planning – this includes everything from actually developing the plan to involving families in the planning. The North Region compares very well in comparison to the other Regions, however, this is the biggest area that needs to be improved upon, especially in the Public sector. Scott did report that Public Supported Living was the only area to score 100% in satisfaction. John Houchin suggested that possibly for next month the group look at the areas that need to be improved upon and issues that need to be worked on for future planning purposes.

***Legislative Breakfast:*** The Legislative Breakfast was held on March 25, 2009 and was attended very well by staff. There were approximately 11 legislators that attended. It was noted that normally sessions begin at 10am, however, on that particular day they did not begin until noon which may have had an impact on attendance. Kathleen suggested possibly changing the time and making it more of a coffee hour, possibly at 9am instead of 8am. It was also suggested that more family members could be asked to bring people, and possibly have more speakers. The concern, however, is that we do not want to have people attend to voice complaints, we would like to have it be more of a thank you. It was asked that the Council begin to think about planning for next year. Kathleen would also like to send a thank you to those that did attend. Linda Angelica will provide a list of those who attended to Kathleen.

***Regional Director's Updates – John Houchin, Sr.***

Dr. Houchin reported on current budget updates. On the Personal Services side, the Governor's budget would cut 28 positions, the Appropriations budget would cut 50 positions statewide.

The funding has been changed for Grads and Age-outs from July 1<sup>st</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>, which is only nine months funding instead of twelve. John explained that not everyone begins using the funding right away, in fact there are some people who had received funding last year that have still not started. These individuals do not lose the funding. There are approximately 90 grads this year, approximately 16 Residential age-outs, and about 26 for Day. For people who are currently in services there was no cut in funding up to this point in either the Governor's budget or the Appropriations budget.

There is no additional Waiting List money in either budget. Any new people will have to go into opportune vacancies. If someone is placed as an emergency, they must take any available vacancy; if the placement is refused, they will no longer be considered on the emergency placement list.

There is also a Retirement Incentive Plan included in the budget which is currently being negotiated with SEBAC. It is a tentative plan until Union votes take place.

Dr. Houchin also reported that a new rate process will be going into effect beginning on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Providers will only be getting paid for services that are provided. They are in the process of revising the Level of Need format so that it will define actual funding that will be provided which will be very specific for anyone new coming in. Next year it will be balanced so that everyone begins at the same level. Enhanced funding will also be eliminated for enhanced staffing, one-to-ones, etc.

Walgreen's Project – Dr. Houchin reported that the Open House was held today in Windsor. We have 5 individuals that have been hired and several others that are in the work training program which is a 45-day program. When the training program is complete, they begin working at minimum wage. The individuals that have already been hired are earning \$14.50/hr. We originally had 25 individuals go through the training, however, they have slowed down on hiring due to the economy. They will be hiring up to 800+ employees and it is open to anyone with a disability. The facility is a very large, impressive building with everything computerized where they process and package all of the shipments of inventory to all of the Walgreen's stores in the area.

Family Forums – Dates are May 11<sup>th</sup> in Putnam, May 18<sup>th</sup> in East Hartford, and May 28<sup>th</sup> in Unionville. They all will be held from 6-8pm and will be attended by both Peter O'Meara and Kathryn duPree. The topic will be the budget. In order to save on postage, paper, etc. we will not be doing a mailing this year. Case managers will instead be calling families to inform them of the dates and it will also be posted on the web.

***Open Forum for Public Participation:*** there was no public participation.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Neumann  
Administrative Assistant