

DDS North Region Advisory & Planning Council

March 18, 2015
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Collette Bement Langner, Nancy Bilyak, Joe Duffy, Annette Scully, Cres Secchiaroli, Claudia Neumann

Guests: Donna Clauson, Mary Lou O'Connor, Lori Sandora, Scott Langner, Lorraine DeFreitas, Jill Hall, Jordan Scheff

Cres Secchiaroli began the meeting with introductions and he shared some background information about himself and his career with the Department. Mr. Secchiaroli will be serving as the Acting Regional Director in the North Region since the appointment of Jordan Scheff as Deputy Commissioner.

- Regional Updates – Mr. Secchiaroli asked members if there is anything in particular that they would like to regularly get updates on since this seems to be a standing agenda item. Council members would like budget updates and to be informed of the impact of any cuts to DDS.
 - The DDS FY2016 and FY2017 Proposed Budget Update from Commissioner Murray was shared (attached)
- Deputy Commissioner Jordan Scheff visited the meeting and discussed Southbury Training School as he has just begun to look at it more closely. He explained that every time a cottage at STS gets to a point (50%) where it is no longer sustainable, we have been taking the opportunity to consolidate cottages and also move them closer within the grounds. Currently there are approximate 34 people that have moved and 40 more that are slated to move. It was stated that of all of the individuals that have moved off of the campus, no one has asked to move back.

A question was asked about whether individuals living there have higher LON scores. Jordan explained that they typically are a little higher due to some specific medical issues. Scores are about 7 on average, where average group home scores are about 5.5.

Lorraine DeFreitas asked about staff and the hiring requirements of Public vs. Private staff. It was explained that there are general requirements that must be met for all positions but there is no standard level of certification required to be employed as direct care staff.

Jordan was asked about the proposed cuts for employment, day services, VSP, etc. He stated that there are several concerns, some of which are:

1. The effects to the VSP program is concerning. The VSP program is an important program to help keep the Waitlist from growing.
2. MFP and how to get people out of long-term placement
3. Grants

It was asked who makes the decision regarding what programs will be cut. Jordan explained that it is the Governor and OPM that make that decision. DDS usually does not have any input.

The reduction in clinical services was discussed. One of those reductions is attributed to a doctor position at Southbury Training School and the other cost is to pay for nurses that are hired from a nursing pool to provide services that direct care staff cannot do.

There was discussion regarding what happens if a provider decides to discontinue services. Jordan and Cres both explained that it has happened several times and that there is a process in place to ensure that services will be continued with a new provider.

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The status of the Community of Practice committees was discussed. Robin Wood has been coordinating CoP which is still very active. The hope is that through Community of Practice, people can use community services to help address needs and possibly reduce some of the needs.

It was asked again if minutes from the CoP meetings would be posted somewhere. This question was raised at a past meeting and was going to be looked into further. There has not been any new information provided regarding posting of meeting minutes.

The next RAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Neumann

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Executive Secretary