

DDS North Region
Regional Advisory Council

June 15, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Donna Clauson, Joe Duffy, Collette Bement Langner, Richard Rothstein, Annette Scully, Tammy Selinger, Andrew Selinger, Elisa Velardo, Claudia Neumann

Guests: Lorraine DeFreitas, Denise King, Frank King, Ronald Langner, Mary Lou O'Connor, Lori Sandora, Pat Stavola

Elisa Velardo, Regional Director, began the meeting with introductions and welcomed the new guests attending the meeting.

- Budget Updates – Elisa stated that since the May meeting had to be rescheduled, she thought that there may be more information to share tonight. However, there is not much more information now. Elisa asked Richard Rothstein if he had any updates to share regarding the budget.
 - The bill passed regarding sharing LON scores, budget information, and PRAT requests with families upon request.
 - Families will be working with DDS over the next few months regarding re-surveying people on the Waitlist. That bill was put on hold.
- Regional Updates –
 - Elisa reported that it has been busy. We have begun to convert the Public homes from the first round of proposals. The second round of RFP's is in process now. The RFP process is a very structured process where providers are invited to submit proposals. The proposals are currently being reviewed to ensure they have been properly submitted. There were two programs from the first round that had no qualified proposals. Those RFP's were re-issued with the second round. Committees should begin to be meeting soon to begin the selection process and then recommendations will be made to Commissioner Murray.
 - Closures – The closure of two Regional Centers has been announced. The Meriden and Ella Grasso Centers will be closing. Some individuals from those regional centers will be moving to the Hartford Center here in the North Region. Some of those transitions have already been occurring and have been going well. Some individuals have been moving into the community. DDS has been diligently updating the vacancy list to ensure that families have an accurate list of available vacancies. Portability, other Public CLA's, and the Regional Center are the other options. The sister of one of the individuals in one of the conversion homes has been very positive regarding the transition, communication, and level of support.
 - Age-outs and Grads – There is no new information regarding grads. It is being looked at very closely and hopefully there will be more information soon. We have begun planning for age-outs and process should go smoothly.

- There were 90 layoffs in DDS; 21 in the North Region. None of the layoffs were case managers. All of the per-diem employees were laid off which did include clinical staff. We have been working very hard to make sure that those roles are being covered.
- There was a question asked regarding the LON process and changing of LON scores. There have been reports that people have been contact by case managers to say that the score has been changed/lowered. Elisa stated that there has been no change in the process. If that is occurring, it should be escalated to the supervisor.
- Waitlist Committee – Elisa asked Joe Duffy to provide an update. Joe reported that the committee was asked to look at the terminology of the waitlist designations, i.e. E, P-1, P-2, etc. They have been meeting to begin that process.
- Question was asked if the PRAT process has changed since the funding moved to DSS. Elisa explained that the funding will be moved to DSS, however DDS still would review and has to work within the allocation.
- Other Discussion:
 - It was asked when it would be known if there were going to be cuts to the Agency. Elisa stated that in all discussions so far, it has been very important to make every effort to not make cuts to providers. There will be no increases, but no cuts have been suggested.
 - Question was asked regarding whether Family Support, Respite, and Camp would be considered as “core functions”. There have been some concerns regarding Family Grants and only a portion of camp being funded, however, we have been trying to maximize the resources as much as possible. We are very much trying to preserve as many services as possible.
 - OIG Report – It was asked how DDS is addressing the concerns. There has been a person identified to look at the recommendations (Kendres Lally). We have not received the final report yet. Elisa explained that in the Region, she directly supervises the Abuse & Neglect Liaison and knows the checks and balances within our system very well. We have a very good system, but it will be reviewed and if there is anything that can be done to strengthen the system, it will be looked at.

There are no meetings scheduled for July or August. The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 21st at 5:00 pm**. Please contact Claudia Neumann if there are any items to be added to the agenda.

Respectfully submitted,
Claudia Neumann
Executive Secretary