

**DDS South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
MS Teams Video/Audio Conferencing
Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2021
6:00 PM**

Members Participating: Chair Leslie Bridges-Parent, Lynn Arezzini, Robin Brewer, Carol Cooney, Barbara Deindorfer, Dawn DeMatteo, Heidi Earle, Kate Haaland, Erin McGuire, and Thomas Dailey, DDS South Regional Director

Public Participation: Sharma Piersal

DDS Staff Guest: Kevin Bronson, Director of Communications, Legislation & Regulations

Scribe: Jolie Crescimano-Goss, DDS Executive Secretary

Chairperson's Report:

- **Call to Order** - Chair Bridges-Parent called the meeting to order shortly after 6:00 PM.
- **Introductions** - All made introductions.
- **Citizen Comments** – Concerns raised around delays in returning to day programming, particularly vocational programs. Request for case managers to provide weekly updates to affected families.

Director Dailey offered to follow up on the status of the programs discussed during the meeting. He shared that 50-60 % of DDS individuals have resumed some type of day programming and that many providers are struggling with hiring.

Parent concern raised about a day program provider requiring 1:1 staffing for her son at program due to his inability to tolerate wearing a mask.

Director Dailey reported that the CT Department of Public Health is set to issue revised guidelines on congregate settings soon.

- **Review of Meeting Minutes** - Following review, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the March 2021, meeting as presented.
- **Field Activity Report** - On-going advocacy for additional funding for DDS' budget.
- **Legislative Updates** - Kevin Bronson, the new DDS Director of Communications, Legislation & Regulations, reintroduced himself and provided an overview of his work history that included working at the Secretary of the State's Office and managed a political action committee for Larson for Congress during the 2019-2020 election cycle. Although he

has more of a political background, he is excited to work in the Health and Human Services realm.

Following, he updated the Council on DDS agency bills, the Governor's proposed budget and the Appropriations Committee's budget (similar to the budget proposed by DDS).

Next, he shared that DDS is hiring temporary workers to reduce OT and that the Governor submitted a request to the 1199 Health Care Union to delay the strike to allow for additional negotiations.

Regional Director's Updates - Director Dailey provided an update on the following items:

- Governor's proposed budget
- DDS budget options
- Expiration of the Governor's Executive Order on Masks.
- Potential 1199 Health Care Workers Strike – Governor requested 1199 delay the strike to allow for further negotiations. Focus is on long-term care facilities and 6 DDS providers with homes. DDS has received strike plans from affected providers and is monitoring the situation closely. DDS stands mobilized to assist to insure coverage and contingency plans.
- EVV – Deadline for 100% compliance by the end of the month. Employers of record (EOR) who have not transitioned to EVV by then must switch to a provider. DDS staff are working to convey the message and assist where they can. The dual timesheet process is still in place.
- State employees transitioning back to offices July 1.
- Staff Attrition – 40 SR staff are eligible for retirement July 2022. There will be a loss of institutional knowledge, but it will create opportunities for others. Due to SEBAC agreement, collective bargaining and managers affected.
- Case Management Job Fair, new hires, temporary worker retirees
- DDS received approval to add allied health support in each region to include OT, PT, SLP. Good news.
- DDS Ombudsman Edward Mambruno has retired.
- 5-year lease approved for the New Haven office. Good news.
- RFP issued for the New Haven Transitional Housing Program. Licensed CLA with 5 beds designed for individuals transitioning out of prison or the DDS TU.
- Mid-State Arc approved for Transitional Housing Program. One house with 5 efficiency apartments. Will give CLA residents an opportunity to train to live on their own. Initially open to their CLA residents then expand to others. 12-18-month training period followed by transition to own apartment setting.
- Gyroscope Supported Apartment Setting in Orange approved for development CT. It will be an integrated setting to include 10-15 units with 15-year rental certificates for people with ID.
- Merger of Mosaic and Vantage by July 2021

Open Council Discussion:

- Member Arezzini shared her appreciation of the DDS Vaccine clinics. They were a wonderful opportunity for individuals and families and smoothly operated.
- Roles/responsibilities of incoming allied staff

New Business - Executive Secretary Jolie Crescimano-Goss announced that she will be transferring to a new position in the NR of DDS effective 6/4/2021. Chair Bridges-Parent thanked her for her support and commitment to the Council over the years.

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

~~Jolie Crescimano-Goss~~

Jolie Crescimano-Goss

Executive Secretary

DDS South Region