

**Department of Developmental Services
Rate Study Committee
Minutes
January 17, 2013**

Present: Quincy Abbot, Stephen Becker, Pauline Boufford, Len Cipline, Sheila Cordock, Mary Pat De Carlo, Joe Drexler, Mark Kovitch, Peter Mason

Stand In Members: Stan Soby, Chet Fischer

The Rate Study Committee was convened by Peter Mason at 1:05 PM, Peter began with an informal discussion of the DDS rate rescissions that were announced on November 29, 2013. Peter described the methodology that was used to determine the reduction for each consumer.

Reports from Subcommittees:

- Residential Issues. Pauline Bouffard's committee is looking at assistive technology that may be helpful in promoting greater independent functioning. Quincy Abbot suggested that the commissioner of the Department of Aging be contacted to learn about hardware and software that have been successful in supporting older individuals who need assistance.
- Community Companions Home (CCH). The system of assigning Level of Need (LON) rates is being examined in order to clear up inconsistencies in funding CCHs. The committee is looking at three levels of need for this program.
- The following subcommittees committees did not meet since the last Rate Study meeting: Sustainability, HIS, Data Management, Implementation

LON Assessment and Screening Tool:

Siobhan Morgan presented observations and information concerning the Level of Need tool and process by which it was developed. The following were highlights of the discussion:

- CMS requires a comprehensive assessment tool. All state agencies will need to use the same instrument
- Funding should be based on the level of need and applied consistently for each person with the same LON score. However, Siobhan indicated that the tool is designed to do identify the individual supports needed, rather than funding levels.

- Case managers must operate in conflict-free environment with regard to funding
- A document was prepared that clarifies instructions and interpretations to the document that was written in 2009. Minimal changes were made.
- The LON process should begin 60-90 days before the next Individual planning team date. Siobhan indicated that the LON is not fully determined until the team approves it.
- A thorough risk assessment and history (items 17, 52, 53, 54, 55) must be done in order for the LON algorithms to work properly.
- It was emphasized that the composite score is generally not sensitive to one or two items

The following observations, issues and concerns were raised by committee members:

Individuals and their families/guardianships would benefit from a communication from DDS that describes pertinent information about the LON including its purpose, use, implications and process.

The committee had a lengthy discussion of the sensitivity of the LON to behavioral support needs. Of particular note were issues related to the (i) intermittent nature of certain problem behaviors and (ii) the scoring of behaviors that were that were being managed effectively by the current support pattern. The larger issue of whether the LON tool is accurately measuring needs was discussed as well.

CLA Rates:

Peter discussed the rescission documentation sent out to all agencies prior to Christmas. There was a .5% reduction across the board for all agencies. A 4.75% cut for those above the LON rate. There are 51 agencies with rates about the LON rates and 38 agencies with rates below.

Peter Mason distributed a spreadsheet that compared the existing residential provider rates with the proposed rates using LON scores. He noted that it would require about 2m additional dollars for all providers to be on LON-based funding.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Becker