



State of Connecticut
Independent Office of the Ombudsperson for Developmental Services
460 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06017

October 2022 Monthly Report to the Council on Developmental Services

Assistance to Individuals and Families

In relation to my duties as Ombudsperson I worked with individuals, families, advocates, DDS, legislators, and outside agencies on numerous issues including:

1. Ongoing weekly support to family of individual transitioning from a CRS to self-direction. (1)
2. Issues between family members/guardians and private providers. (4)
3. Mediation between family member/guardian & DDS Regional Center. (1)
4. Information, referral, and outreach on behalf of individuals who are not eligible for DDS funding & supports. (4)
5. Issues between families and CCH providers. (2)
6. Information, support, and collaboration with DDS for individual in BSP seeking residential placement. (1)
7. Questions about DDS eligibility. (5)
8. Families seeking follow-up on hearing requests. (4)
9. Collaboration with DDS regarding health and safety concerns due to unexplained injuries and multiple active investigations involving individual in a private group home. (1)
10. Calls from legislators on constituent issues. (3)
11. Assistance to Aging and Disability Services regarding DDS self-direction and DDS waivers.
12. Assistance and information to MA Ombudsperson.
13. Issues around healthcare decisions between provider and guardians. (1)
14. Consultation with DDS, referral, and support for parent of school aged son in BSP seeking residential support. (1)
15. Referral and information to people with autism and other disabilities on benefits and supports. (3)
16. Assistance to families in establishing a Parent/Guardian meeting at NW Regional Center. (1)
17. Family issues/ complaints/questions about abuse & neglect investigation process. (1)
18. Continued work with guardian & DDS to expand access and visitation for family members. (1)

To address these concerns, I connected families with resources and information inside and outside of DDS, and maintained regular contact with the following people and entities within DDS:

- Commissioner Scheff,
- Regional Directors & Assistant Regional Directors,
- Case Manager Supervisors & Case Managers
- Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Self Determination Directors
- Health Management Director
- DDS Legal Department
- Director of Case Management
- Self Determination Directors
- DDS Abuse & Investigation Division.

Interaction with DDS, other state agencies and community organizations

- Member of DDS Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee and DEI Strategic Planning Committee.

- Member of State Employee Leadership Network (SELN) Strategic Planning Steering Committee and SELN Leadership Subcommittee.
- Member of Council on Developmental Disabilities.
- Co-chair of ARPA Individual & Family Engagement Committee.
- Member of ARPA Advisory Committee.
- Attending Life Course Ambassador training.
- Attended regular state-wide and regional meetings including incident command calls, forensic meetings, waiver team meetings, provider leadership meetings and others.
- Monthly meeting with Commissioner Scheff.
- Monthly meeting with Deputy Commissioner Velardo.
- Monthly meeting with DDS Health Management Administrator.
- Bimonthly meeting with DDS Director of Case Management.
- Regular meeting with DDS Employment & Day Services Division.
- Attended DDS Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Coffee Conversation on Guardianship in CT.
- Met with DDS Self Advocate Coordinators.
- Met with APSE, PATH and The Arc Connecticut
- Consulted with Dr. Gerard Kerins on a proposal for a Center for Older Adults with Intellectual Disabilities at Yale.

Areas of Concern

- Impact of staffing crisis on ability to access supports, person centered planning, advocacy, provider flexibility.
- Maintaining active family involvement, advocacy and support for individuals who receive residential supports outside of the family home through DDS or private providers.
- Supporting, protecting and encouraging individual and family advocacy.
- Provider, family, & guardian accountability.
- The lack of support options for individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities who are not eligible for DDS funding.
- Guardianship statistics in CT as compared to other states/ lack of information on alternatives to guardianship in Connecticut.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Shannon Jacovino
Ombudsperson
October 18, 2022**