

DDS Provider Council
MINUTES
3/14/2008
Wallingford

Present: Katie Banzhaf, Kathryn du Pree, Debbie Duval, John Houchin, Stan Soby, Mark Ritter, Terry Macy, Peter Mason, Pam Fields, Ellen Fisher, Joe Drexler, Mary McKay, Alyssa Goduti.

Guest Presenters: Dan Micari, Beth McArthur

1. Provider Profiles: Dan Micari shared that the Provider Profiles will be available online in October. This will be an interim step until the QSR reports are scheduled to become available.

Dan explained that they are planning to replicate the current format used in the West Region. The timeframe is as follows: format and collect data - 4/1/08; Web Posting 10/1/08. There will be two clean quarters up on the site. Data including observation, customer satisfaction, safety checklist, “% met” across service types will be arranged by service type (CLA, SLA, etc.), not by individual house. The web will reflect the aggregate by agency by service type. QSR certification will also be by service type. Licensing posting will remain.

Eventually there will be an automated web-based application for QSR, which will have real time interaction.

Ellen asked if the DDS website could include a link to the private agency website. Dan acknowledged that it would be nice to have and /or a face page of the agency then the QSR data.

Mary McKay reported that the parents of her Regional Advisory Committee reported they would like to see online the following: providers turnover rate, provider specialty, abuse and neglect data (decisions). Basically asking, “How safe is my child?”

Dan will show format at next meeting and a month of data (revisit in May).

2. Employment Initiative: Beth McArthur provided an update on the Employment Initiative. Beth is working with the State Employment Leadership Network–SELN (coordinated by NASDDDS and ICI). She reviewed Handout #1, which summarizes data from June 04 through June 07 and indicates a flat growth rate of DSO and GSE programs, a decrease in sheltered employment and a slight increase in SEI. Of course, the Initiative would like to see SEI increase even more.

Handout # 2 reveals that only four high school graduates in FY 08 entered sheltered work.

Handout #3 is a fact sheet for Medicaid for the Employment Disabled Program (MED/SO5) and the DDS Waivers. (SO5 is the DDS Code.) DDS is working on family friendly brochures to share this information.

Beth feels this is a good opportunity for job seekers. The individuals participating in the Walgreen's Project are most likely to need this option. Beth noted that PASS and IRWE are underutilized in CT and utilization of these options could be enhanced through education.

Another opportunity is Connect-Ability (Handout #4). She reviewed the recent planning grants awarded to local initiatives and shared the web site link. Beth encouraged everyone to view and use the link. She also noted that she has the catchment areas for each grant if other wish to connect to the grants.

Handout #5 is the Employment First document. If you wish to provide feedback contact Beth.

Handout #6. Beth shared the Provider Council Employment discussion points 1-12.

1. Beth noted that we have lost "our language." It is time to review and implement policies and procedures that reflect a preference toward employment.
2. Beth asked for a permanent Employment Sub Committee of the Provider Council. Katie Banzhaf volunteered. Katie also suggested training for Case Managers and move away from language of "Do you want to work?" to "Where do you want to work?"
3. Promote best practices: In the schools we must start with the expectation of work. This will involve the training of school personnel. Self Advocates want to see great jobs with good wages and benefits and will be our best sales folks.
4. Explore pilot initiatives.
5. Review LON data compared to SEI data and ask why not SEI.
6. Update IP forms to address employment.
7. Identify training needs.
8. Explore employment theme for FY09.
9. Analyze wage data.
10. Identify employment outcome data and method of collection.
11. Strengthen partnership with Connect-Ability.
12. Learn from the Walgreen's Project

There was a general discussion regarding the movement away from sheltered employment. ARC has sponsored legislation for a study group. CMS does not consider sheltered work as a waiver service except for short-term training.

SELN hosts a conference call once a month. In their discussion, it was noted that the 3.4 version of the technical guide for writing waivers (old version) does not support payment for SHE but this has not been implemented. CMS has, however, added auditors recently as CMS is currently under scrutiny. SELN feels there is a need for a national effort to reduce SHE. Most states have bundled SHE with other activities – e.g. group

employment. CT's plan bills under Group Day Services. This is a National issue that will be addressed.

Kathryn agreed to bring the request for membership in the permanent Employment Subcommittee up at the Trades to solicit members: one from the Provider Council, 2 from each Trade.

3. DDS Conference 2010-Spring

Kathryn presented the Partnership Conference. She anticipates a two-day venue in the Hartford Convention Center, that will bring together all stakeholders including self-advocates, parents, providers, family, etc. The NASDDDS is hosting their meeting in CT in 2010 and this creates a unique opportunity. The goal will be to celebrate success and look at policy direction.

Kathryn asked for help in expanding the Conference 2010 work group, which currently has AAID and DD Council as sponsors. The following people volunteered to help with the conference planning: Pam Fields, Alyssa Goduti, Terry Macy. Kathryn du Pree will email out a one-page description.

4. Rate Committee Report – Peter Mason shared Handout # 6 Draft Transition Plan for Day Programs. Peter and Joe Drexler reviewed the draft document. Joe noted that there are a variety of options that are not mutually exclusive. He noted that there is still a lot of work to do.

Terry Macy questioned pressure from the feds. Joe noted that the expectation is to have a rate system that pays the same rates for same needs.

It was questioned whether the state services will fall under these rates. Joe responded that this was a definitely an issue. Joe noted that the state no longer accepts people in public day programs and has been downsizing.

Terry Macy stressed the need for a crystal clear message with the Legislature if asking for funds for this initiative. Kathryn agreed we need a shared vision and partnership by next fall to go to the legislature.

Joe noted that the next step is to analyze the impact of each option outlined. Peter reported that they are testing out the LON scale and possible revision. They have a goal of 7/1/08 (which may be too soon). It was agreed that the LON must fit with the grand plan. Peter noted that they are looking at trends as well as individuals.

Regarding next steps, Peter distributed and reviewed the Draft Goals for the Planning Process. The goal for finalizing and implementing the transition plan is 7/1/09. Web-based attendance reporting is targeted for 10/08. It was again agreed that the LON must be accurately associated with rates for the plan to be implemented.

There was discussion regarding the three billing systems: Master Contract, Waivers, Individual Budgets and the need for electronic billing. Peter noted they are meeting next week to discuss interfacing the billing mechanisms.

Alyssa raised the issue of CAN and CCPA staff joining the waiver work groups. Kathryn noted that all meetings are open. Alyssa noted that they would like to participate, not just observe and listen. It was noted that the Trades have reps in attendance for that purpose.

Peter provided an update on the work toward developing transportation rates for vehicles, which are equipped to transport people using wheelchairs for accessibility. (Handout #7.) The committee has had good representation, has worked to develop a consistent methodology. They looked at data for 90 vehicles across several agencies. The result is \$.85/mile for individuals in the vehicle who use a wheelchair. Ambulatory persons on the van will be billed at \$.43/mile. Stan questioned the methodology noting that the costs are fixed and the higher rate should apply to all passengers in the vehicle. This was not agreed to by the department representatives. *There is a limited window for additional feedback because the rates need to be completed so they may take effect in July.*

5. Initiative for FY09

Kathryn reviewed the following Initiatives for FY 09. She will bring these to the Trades for additional input.

Initiatives FY 09:

1. Waiver Work Group will continue
2. Employment Initiative
3. Conference Planning
4. Development of a Shared Advocacy Platform in relation to Legislative Initiatives.

The next meeting will be held on May 9, 2008 in Wallingford.