

DRAFT Advisory Council to the Division of Autism Services
Notes, March 30, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT: Judy Dowd, Ruth Eren, Chera Gerstein, David Daniel Klipper, Sara Lourie, James Loomis, Kathy Marchione, Yana Razumnaya, Nikki Richer, Lois Rosenwald, Jonathan Ross, Stan Soby, Margery Stahl, Jennifer Ureta, Tricia Winter, Larry Wood

MEMBERS ABSENT: Catherine Abercrombie, Nancy Bagatell, Ann Gionet, Jacqueline Kelleher, Sara Reed

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: Kathy Reddington, Lori Conchado

Michelle Sideleau Wendt, a member of the public, joined the meeting.

November 2010 Minutes - Accepted and approved.

By-laws - Revisions to the By-laws were reviewed, accepted and approved. Additional changes to the By-laws should be directed to the Nominations Committee for review and recommendation.

Executive Committee Members – A new change in the By-laws was approved, adding two additional members to the committee. The Nominations Committee recommended Tricia Winter and Margery Stahl as new members. The recommendations were accepted and approved.

Membership– Jennifer Carroll has resigned from the Council due to other commitments. She recommended Tesha Imperati, a member of the Family Support Network, to serve as a representative. An application has been sent to Tesha and she will be invited to our next meeting.

Application Process - In a discussion of the application process, it was decided that prospective members should attend a meeting and provide feedback prior to members voting on their appointment.

Orientation Packet – Co-chairs suggested the development of an Orientation Packet to provide information on available services. Co-chairs will prepare a draft. Agency members from DDS, BRS, DMHAS, DCF will prepare a summary of services/areas of interest on what they do and how they interface with individuals on the spectrum.

Autism Division Update (Kathy Reddington) – The division is working on assisting consumers in applying for Medicaid services, which has caused some shifting of caseloads. Individuals currently participating in the autism program, who do not have Medicaid, have been notified that they must enroll in Medicaid services to continue receiving services.

New consumers have been added to caseloads as individuals chose not to participate in Medicaid services.

The Medicaid waivers will be posted on the DDS website today. A public hearing is scheduled for April 28th at 1:00 at the LOB. Following the public hearing, CMS will review the waiver and submit any questions for clarification.

CT ACT Early, a sub group of the UCONN Center for Excellence, continues to work on better criteria for a Diagnostic Guideline for psychologists/psychiatrists assessments. The criteria will be used to determine appropriate services and standardize determinations between agencies. A first draft is expected to be ready in November.

Lois participated in the LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) which is focusing on awareness and leadership training in neurodevelopmental disorders with an emphasis on ASD. <http://advance.uconn.edu/2009/090126/09012605.htm>

Southern CT State University is developing a white paper on RDI (Relationship Development Intervention), which will be posted on their website when ready. The paper will speak to intervention and how it addresses the disability. The developer doesn't allow research, so it is hard to know if it can/should be funded under state programs.

OPM Update (Judy Dowd) - 3 Case manager positions have been recommended for the waiver. The Autism budget has been reduced to approximately \$1.2 million to reflect actual expenditure level for FY2010

The Governor included funding (up to \$125,000) for a feasibility study to examine the needs for those with ASD. The study will include needs, costs and possible implementation of a full service facility. Kathy has participated in meetings with the Hospital for Special Care, which is interested in renovating and operating an inpatient facility. The state has children placed out of state due to the lack appropriate community based residential services in Connecticut. If the study could determine what would be necessary to bring them back in state, it may be possible to amend the Level III waiver and bring them back under the waiver. It is unclear what housing options will be included. The Governor's budget included funding for approximately 150 new supportive housing slots but not for the ASD population. State agencies will be meeting in April to discuss how to proceed with this feasibility study. An update will be provided at the May meeting.

Autism Awareness Day – is Monday, April 4th in Room 310 of the LOB.

BRS Update (Kathy Marchione) – BRS services are available to all people who have serious disabilities.

BRS received ARRA funding to hire job development consultants to do on the job placement for BRS consumers.

The BRS database currently does not have the data available to reliably determine how many individuals they serve with ASD.

BRS has coordinated a task force to make recommendations for best practices for helping people who are on the Autism spectrum become and stay employed. The recommendations will be coming soon.

BRS has a clinical committee which meets monthly with consumers, staff and family members to review services and make recommendations. Individuals are referred to the committee by BRS counselors. For individuals in the school system, BRS has funded a grant that provides staff to work on transition issues with the school districts and BRS.

Areas of Focus – At the November meeting, it was decided that the council would focus on Housing, Maintaining Resources and Employment.

- General agreement that the Executive Committee should be responsible for focusing on maintaining resources.
- Issues on housing were raised regarding options for our individuals. It would be useful to become more informed on what is available, and what is done for other populations, what is the cost and how are they funded. A compilation of materials to create a document for families with an appendix listing options would be helpful.
- Issues were raised in terms of Section 8 housing and whether individuals with ASD would be safer in houses for elderly as opposed to the poor. It was determined that the Executive Committee will frame the discussion on housing for the next meeting.
- Judy recommended focusing on what concerns the council has with housing and employment that could be used to determine needs. There is money available and interest to hire a consultant that could do a study and make recommendations.

Discussion of Future Council Meetings – There is concern about individuals having difficulty with applying for and understanding Medicaid services. The council would like to invite Medicaid staff and individuals familiar with housing resources to present at future meetings. Possible guests could include Barbara Geller, Marty Legault, Dennis Geary or Stan Soby. Lois also knows of a consultant that has been successful in helping families through the Medicaid process. The Executive Committee will prepare a format and invite guests to the May meeting. Any suggestions for speakers should be directed to Co-chairs for consideration.

Meeting Dates for September and November – David Daniel requested moving these two meetings to the first or second Wednesday of the month. Lori will review dates for available rooms and notify members of changes.

Next meeting is scheduled for May 18th