



**Autism Services Initiative for Adults  
Autism Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

**June 24, 2016, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Emory Autism Center 1551 Shoup Court, Decatur, Georgia 30033**

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<b>Facilitator:</b>	Scott Bales (co-chair)
<b>Minutes Secretary:</b>	Katherine Roeder
<b>Advisory Committee Attendees:</b>	Jennifer Briggs, Deborah Conway, Rena Harris, Theresa Heard, Stacey Lane, Kim Lucker-Greene, Laura Owen, Julie Prescott, Stacey Ramirez, Michelle Schwartz, April Umstead
<b>Absent:</b>	Tim Cartledge, Ray Johnson, Emily Myers, Eren Kyle Neiderhoffer, Greta O'Dell, Pauline Shaw
<b>DBHDD Staff:</b>	Darlene Meador
<b>Emory Staff:</b>	Joseph Cubells, Katherine Roeder, Danielle Belva, Carey Drews-Botsch, Nick Bounamia
<b>Visitors:</b>	Dan Crimmins (Georgia State University)

**Agenda**

**Call to Order**

- Scott Bales called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m., and invited each attendee to introduce him/herself. The group welcomed Emory team members Carey Drews-Botsch, professor of epidemiology, and Nick Buonamia, data analyst, who were present for the discussion about project data.

**Approval/Discussion of Minutes of August Meeting**

- Scott Bales asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 29, 2016 meeting, which had been previously distributed.

Motion: Joe Cubells; Second: Danielle Belva

The minutes were unanimously approved.

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**Topic: Identification of Key Indicators for Access and Quality of DBHDD Services to Adults with ASD – Update and Review of Progress**

Darlene Meador provided an overview of the work done by the Emory data team, which included input from the Advisory Committee on Access and Quality. She guided the discussion using a slide set, a handout on data analysis topics, and a handout with a summary of data sources and extractions. Committee members made the following observations:

- The seven data sources used for the project all come from different places. In the future, attention must be paid to gathering data through an integrated system. This is one of the goals of the current restructuring efforts at DBHDD.
- Some group members felt that Georgia's effort to gather and analyze this information about adults with ASD receiving services may be unique. It would be interesting to see what other states are doing in this regard.
- There may be data available on provider capacity. Meador will research whether this exists.
- The final report to state leadership should include this information to demonstrate the magnitude of the challenge of providing services to this population.

Breakout groups were formed to discuss and give feedback about **selected waiver services and factors influencing access to these services**. This information will aid the Emory team in performing data analysis. The three groups reported as follows:

**Breakout Groups I – Selected Waiver Services**

**Day Services Group:** Danielle Belva, Dan Crimmins, Scott Bales, Stacey Ramirez, Jennifer Briggs, Deborah Conway

Factors Influencing Access to Day Services:

1. Lack of transportation
2. Proximity of day program
3. Provider capacity by region
4. Lack of flexibility in provider policies to support individualized job sustainability
5. Low expectations of some educators and families about employment
6. Lack of behavioral support specific to autism

**Community Living/Residential Supports Group:** Laura Owen, Rena Harris, Julie Prescott, Joe Cubells

Factors Influencing Access to Community Living/Residential Supports:

1. An individual's funding sources
2. Family/individual education on access and choices
3. Access to support coordinator
4. Lack of incentives for providers (e.g., for moving individuals to less restrictive environments and obtaining successful gains in independent living skills)

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5. Provider capacity
6. Limited choice in rural areas
7. Inefficiencies and delays of current processes (site numbers, etc.)
8. Lack of coordinated transition from high school

**Specialty Supports Group:** Michelle Schwartz, Theresa Heard, Stacey Lane, Kim Lucker-Greene

Factors Influencing Access To Specialty Supports:

1. Shortage of providers
  2. Providers that do not accept Medicaid
  3. Lack of information and/or technical assistance for providers
  4. Lack of knowledge by/interest from community resource providers about becoming Medicaid waiver providers
  5. Lack of dissemination of information about available services to families/individuals
  6. Lack of knowledge about community resources at regional level
  7. Opportunities to bill waiver services for additional specialties
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A second group of breakouts was formed to discuss and give feedback about **specialty populations and factors influencing access to services**. These observations were gathered to aid the Emory team in performing data analysis. The three groups reported as follows:

### **Breakout Groups II – Specialty Populations and Access to Services**

**Transitional Young Adults Group:** Kim Lucker-Greene, Stacey Ramirez, Deborah Conway, Dan Crimmins, Jennifer Briggs, Julie Prescott, Danielle Belva, Nick Bounamia

Factors influencing access to services:

1. All previous bullets highlighted by the first breakout groups
2. Lack of awareness of the need for incorporating technology
3. Person-centered approach, with fidelity of implementation (identification of strengths and interests)
4. Lack of knowledge on the part of schools and families about the need to start waiver process
5. Need for survival and independent living skills and the ability to make community connections
6. Disconnection of services agencies from each other and the school systems
7. Movement from entitlement system to one that is needs-based
8. Challenges of transitioning from Georgia Network for Education and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) to adult services

**Individuals with Co-occurring Psychiatric Diagnoses Group:** Michelle Schwartz, Joe Cubells, April Umstead, Scott Bales

Factors influencing access to services:

1. Limited community service options for people who are symptomatic and have high levels of need
2. Shortage of professionals and community providers willing and able to serve individuals with ASD and co-occurring psychiatric disorders
3. Lack of knowledge about individuals with autism and other specialty needs (e.g., co-occurring psychiatric disorders, learning disabilities, physical health issues, hypo or hyper sensitivity issues, and hypotonia or low muscle tone)
4. Insufficient capacity of provider staff with needed skill sets
5. Sustainable training and development which include opportunities for technical assistance

**Individuals Transitioned from State Hospitals and Other High Risk**

**Individuals Group:** Theresa Heard, Laura Owen, Rena Harris, Carey Drews-Botsch, and Darlene Meador

Factors influencing access to services:

1. Provider concerns of adequate, ongoing resources to support high risk individuals
2. Provider apprehension that support needs of individuals are underestimated
3. Licensing constraints and proxy caregiver rules
4. High medical acuity
5. Lack of physician specialization and availability
6. Nursing and behavioral support provider shortage
7. Family education about services
8. Dental services shortage
9. Fear of liability
10. Lack of resources (training, health care support) directed at physicians to help them understand patients' needs

**Next Steps:** The next Advisory Group meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 26. A summary of the results of the focus groups will be presented at that time.

**Adjournment:** Scott Bales adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.