

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
Division of Developmental Disabilities
Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)
July 27, 2022
10:00 a.m.

IDD Advisory Council Participants: Bruce Lindemann (Chair), Heather Daily, (Vice Chair), Estelle Duncan (Secretary), Riad Akhras, Josette Akhras, Lynnette Bragg, Jeffery Cantor, Caroline Chandler, Gina DiPolito, June DiPolito, Nandi Isaac, Julie Kable, Twana King, Heidi Moore, Shane Wellman, David Wilbur

State Office Participants: Ron Wakefield, Robert Bell, Lori Campbell, Christine Gudgin, Ashleigh Caseman, Twanda Scales, Jeff Thompson, Olivia Nickens

Guests: Debbie Conway, Dana Lloyd, Julie McGowan

Bruce Lindemann called the meeting to order at 10:00 am, welcomed everyone and completed roll call. The minutes from the April 27, 2022, meeting were approved as written. Due to the minutes being sent out late, participants can send in comments or corrections if needed.

Updates from Division Office

Ron Wakefield: Ron stated that there have been many changes in positions.

- Dr. Jeff Thompson is now the Director of Community Services.
- Olivia Nickens has been with DBHDD for years and is now the Family Support Manager.
- Christine Gudgin has worked in Supported Employment for years and is now the manager over Supported Employment.
- Twanda Scales worked in Behavioral Health, then worked with a managed care company and is now over Autism and Crisis Services. She is also the assistant COO of Admissions.

The Legislative session was very successful. All the support groups worked well together to advocate for the needs of individuals with IDD. The needs of the IDD population were well laid out and resulted in positive results from the Legislature. HB 1013 was recently passed. Ron stated that they are reviewing the bill and trying to determine the impact on IDD. Heidi Moore expressed that the bill originally contained language to include dually diagnosed, but it was taken out. This is concerning.

Jeff Thompson: Jeff has been working closely with Olivia to review the Family Support policies. Families have not been able to easily access State Funded Respite. Agencies that coordinate respite should be able to charge a coordination fee to cover staff expenses. There is a \$3000.00 limit for respite. For exceptional circumstances, it is possible to request approval for a higher limit. There have been some problems for families who have moved

from NOW or COMP to EDWP. There have been reports of denial at recertification time. This is a double standard. Families can receive EDWP and Family Support. This needs further discussion.

Ashleigh Caseman:

- **Appendix K** is still in effect. On April 16, the Federal Public Health Emergency was approved again. Appendix K will remain in effect for six months after the Public Health Emergency has ended. There was a request to give families and providers as much notice as possible before ending Appendix K. Adequate notice is critical.
- The **COMP** renewal is still pending CMS approval. NOW renewal is due 11/8/22, so there is still time for public comment. It will go to the DCH Board on 6/2/22. What are the proposed changes? The town hall meeting documents contain all the proposed changes. DCH is also renewing one of their waivers; they are doing this jointly with DBHDD. Ashleigh will add the documents to the website. The feedback so far has been positive.
- **Legislative update:**
 - HB 1013 is currently being studied by DBHDD.
 - SB 610 includes a requirement for FY 2024 and every four years thereafter that there must be a comprehensive rate study completed. Great news! Any increase in rates must be approved by the legislature and CMS. In addition, funding must be appropriated. People really felt heard this session; it is critical to continue to communicate effectively with our legislators. There was a rate study done six years ago. There were two parts to the rate study; however only Part 1 was completed. Twenty-four new rates were put into place at one time; it was overwhelming!
 - SC EX 770- IDD Study Committee to study the workforce with a goal of developing workforce strategies. There must be capital investment. It is underway now.
 - FY '23 budget - HB 81 recommended a 5% rate increase with approval from CMS. The rate increase will be put into Appendix K until the waiver renewal is approved. HB 91 provides for an additional 2% increase for all providers in FY '23. The rate increase will be retroactive to July 1, 2021. It will take a lot of work with the billing system to accomplish this. Are Participant Directed (PD) families going to be able to access funds so late in the year? A Special Bulletin will go out as well as a PD newsletter. It will be announced across the board. 23 lines of service will need to be adjusted, Prior Approvals will need to be updated and ISP's will need to be updated.
 - There will be three phases in the Rate Study - Phase 1 Phase 2 and Phase 3. There will be opportunities for participation during all phases. Ashleigh will send out the information to members. Burns and Associates will be doing the rate study again this time. It was suggested that there needed to be a discussion about problems/issues with the last rate study. There were 523 new waiver slots approved. Grass roots advocacy was at its' finest! Great advocacy and a huge accomplishment.

Christine Gudgin: ARPA funds are being used for a SE Pilot. Transitioning out of the pilot can be difficult/problematic. They are looking at individuals who have challenges and trying to develop additional supports. A work group has been established; there will be four sessions starting in May. Lynnette Bragg, GCDD and others will be participating in the workgroup. How do individuals transition to established services at the end of the pilot? How do individuals get engaged in the pilot? Individuals must be on the planning lists and

providers must be ANCHOR certified. They are hoping to serve 100-150 individuals through the pilot. Individuals on the planning list should call their Navigator at the Regional Office. GVRA and DBHDD have a non-funded MOU. Debbie Conway asked if any meaningful thought has been given to include the school systems in the planning phase.

Lori Campbell: With all the new waivers approved by the legislature, we must staff up to process all of the new individuals into services. We must have a quality workforce and build for sustainability. Overall, ARPA funding is for the entire state; DD only has a small portion of the funding.

Robert Bell: Support Coordinators try to coordinate waiver and non-waiver services. Bruce stated that in rural areas it is difficult to access medical services. How do families access needed services, especially medical and psychiatric services, prescriptions and support services? Twana agreed that there is a significant shortage of healthcare providers in rural Georgia. Can tele-health be used? It is more widespread and available now, but access is still an issue. What is the role of the CSB's? Clinics and crisis services are available for individuals living with their families, private providers and public providers. If services are needed, contact the Support Coordinator, Regional Office, CSB's and/or crisis line. Psychiatric services are difficult to locate/access, even in the metro Atlanta area. The Resource Specialists at the Regional Offices are a resource. Workforce issues are still a huge problem everywhere.

We should look to our SE individuals to help address the workforce shortage.

Public Comment: David Wilbur asked how people know that they can make public comment? Hopefully by the next meeting there will be a process in place to have minutes and agenda available in advance. Dana Lloyd (GAO) asked what services are currently available through NOW/COMP? She recommended that the proposed changes in services be published. She is very interested in the rate study. How do people provide input into the rate study?

It was recommended that it is critical to include dually diagnosed in language of HB 1013. There is a greater need for collaboration.

Member Rounds:

Heidi Moore: The North Fulton County Expo was wonderful. Services are great for people with disabilities in North Fulton. Community engagement is phenomenal! Heidi and her husband will celebrate their 25th anniversary next month. They are going on a trip and will be leaving Jacob for 10 days!! Her other son, Jared, is finishing his second year at University of Alabama at Birmingham.

David Wilbur: No feedback today.

Estelle Duncan: Her son/daughter in law have been notified that her granddaughter has made enough progress this year to graduate from kindergarten and move into first grade. She will attend school for two hours twice a week this summer to hopefully retain/reinforce her skills. Estelle had a knee replacement in February and is continuing to do physical therapy.

June and Gina DiPolito: Gina loves being on the IDD Advisory Board. The Self Advocacy workshop had over 125 participants; there is another session tomorrow. United for Change has an Advocacy for Voting session. June was very happy with the legislative session.

Nandi Isaac: Nandi is looking for a home; her parents are aging, and she feels that she needs to have alternative arrangements in place. Her mom is trying to get her into her own home with CLS supports, but there are not many programs in the Macon area that offer this service. She is currently taking cooking lessons.

Julie Kable: Psychiatrist in her department is currently on Maternity leave until July. They are now using a consultative care model.

Lynnette Bragg: Ball season has started - come on down!! The Navigators play on Thursday nights at 7:00.

Caroline Chandler : CSB's do take their role as safety net seriously. They have a navigation unit where people can walk in 24/7 and receive services. They have a good network of local providers.

Twana King: no longer on the call

Shane Wellman: Workforce issues are still a major problem in residential.

Heather Daily: No comment today

Josette Akras: No longer on the call

Bruce Lindemann: Carla and her three roommates will be moving into a 4 bedroom house in Dunwoody approximately 500 feet from Bruce's house. Carla and Bruce went to the Zoning Commission about 3-4 years ago and got wording into the zoning laws that would allow the move without filing for a Special Land Use Permit. The target date for the move is July 1.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, July 27, 2022, from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm.

The meeting schedule for the remainder of the year will be October 26, 2022; January 25, 2023; and April 26, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Estelle Mulherin Duncan

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DD Advisory Council Secretary