

Agenda

- **Welcome, Introductions & Approval of the March and May Minutes (Vote)**
 - **Legislative Update**
 - **BDS Update**
 - Provider readiness
 - Family Support Council/Recreation funding
 - **Committee Updates:**
 - Data (Emily- 5 mins)
 - Rules and Regulations (Stephanie- 15 mins)
 - Vote on HeM 522 comments
 - Members Relations (Adrienne- 10 mins)
 - Vote on amending the process
 - Person Centered Planning (Isadora- 10 mins)
 - Vote on Letter
 - **Other Business and Announcements**
 - 2021-2022 Annual Report (vote)
 - Planning the July meeting
 - Goodbye to Brittany and Recruiting New Support Person
 - Meeting Recap
 - Other Business
 - **Public Comment**

Member Attendees

Members Present:

- Stephanie Patrick
- Sarah Tollefsen
- Jim Piet
- Emily Manire
- Tammy Mills
- Rich Crocker
- Carrie Duran
- Cathy Spinney
- Ann Sanok
- Jessica Gorton
- Lisa Steadman
- Lauren Ramsey
- Karen Hatch
- Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre
(not voting)

Alternates:

- Kelly Ehrhart
- Pam Stiles (voting)
- Karen Blake (voting)
- Dennis Greenwood

Guests:

Abby Conger Irene Tyler

Administrator:

Brittany Potvin



Welcome, Introductions

Stephanie led introductions prior to a quorum being established. Once there was a quorum, she recapped who was in attendance both in person and remotely. Stephanie moved to the BDS update since Abby was available for a limited time.



BDS Update

Questions had been sent to BDS prior to the meeting as submitted by Council members. **Provider readiness**

Abby stated that BDS has 93% of prior authorizations with the rendering providers that are listed on those authorizations enrolled. Therefore only about 7 of the prior authorizations for the systems do not currently have an enrolled provider. This data was as of 2 weeks prior to this meeting and it is likely that additional providers have enrolled since then. In terms of the numbers of providers enrolled, 48 providers are fully enrolled and have the ability to direct bill on July 1st. About 22 additional providers have submitted applications that are being processed. DHHS expects that they will be ready for direct bill on 7/1. Abby stated that from last week alone, 11 providers had been enrolled out of those 22, so they're really pushing through to get the remaining providers enrolled.

As of the beginning of June there were about 25 providers that were currently providing services to individuals that had not yet submitted an application. Quite a few of those providers are specialty service providers, and an influx of those applications have come in over the last couple of weeks.

Outreach to providers will continue this week and next week to find out if they're planning on submitting their applications, or not, if there is confusion, do they have questions, etc. The missing providers are providing services to one or 2 individuals. Abby continued that yesterday a letter was sent to those providers that have either submitted applications, but are not yet enrolled or have not yet submitted an application, offering a contingency plan for 7/1 to ensure that there's no interruptions in services to individuals as well as no interruption to payment to providers. BDS is working with one area agency, OneSky, who has agreed to work on the contingency plan, and for any provider that is not enrolled as of 7/1, OneSky will bill for them. This will ensure that providers can continue to get paid, and that providers can continue going through the enrollment process with the goal of all of the providers being enrolled no later than September first. Providers have until Friday to notify Abby of what their choice is for July 1st.

In addition, cohort groups were started for training. About 48 providers were divided up into 3 groups, and BDS is very targeted readiness training every Friday with them for an hour. And so any providers that are enrolled, but did not get to do one of the cohort groups, yet will also be allowed to. BDS wants to make sure that providers feel ready and have received all of the training that they're looking for, to be able to direct bill.

Abby was asked if there was a list of approved providers that could go out to families and agencies. She had just completed a review of that list this morning to make sure that it was user friendly. The list is organized by services they provide and includes website



link (except for 2 that do not have active websites). This list will be kept up to date through the summer. It is currently on the BDS website but will be available on the NHEasy site in July. It will also be sent out in the next Family Newsletter and in other communications.

Abby also shared that in order to help ensure provider readiness there has been 5

weeks of Service Coordinator Supervisor trainings as well as biweekly intake and service coordinator meetings with an average of 200 participants. Additionally, monthly meetings with providers will continue along with bi-weekly 1 hour open office hours for

providers with questions. BDS has also completed the first phase of their IT training. All the area agencies received training at the end of May and beginning of June on the intake and eligibility process in the New Hampshire Easy System, the registry process and completing the level of care for review within the New Hampshire easy system, the initial level of care for individuals. Additionally they have done service coordination training for agencies on phase 2. This was on service management, the service coordination dashboards, submitting service authorizations for approval, submitting the annual level of care, uploading assessments and other documents, as well as correspondence with BDS within the New Hampshire Easy System.

In the month of July, BDS plans to have 2 to 3 open office hours every single week, specific for assistance within the New Hampshire Easy System, so that area agencies and service coordinators can ask questions and troubleshoot any problems they might be having within the new system.

Abby was asked if ISAs will need to be put in manually by agency staff. Abby said that the process will essentially be the same but instead of entering it into the MMIS system they will be putting it into the NH Easy System.

Another member asked if BDS is running across any kind of particular common pain points that the trainees are experiencing. Abby explained that there has been, and continues to be, a SurveyMonkey link to gather information from the cohorts as to what they are struggling with so that they can be addressed. One area was the out of service unit and how to bill, and how to set up an authorization for out of service days for an individual, for an individual that may be going home to see family or maybe going and attending camp to ensure that providers have enough units within their services to be able to bill. This has since been addressed in two different trainings.

The same member asked if there is going to be a help desk available after 7/1. Abby let the group know that BDS implemented a dedicated email and phone line for providers to call specifically for questions about their readiness, and that phone line is staffed Monday through Friday. by a BDS staff member, and they are committed to returning any calls and emails within 24 business hours. This is also staffed on the weekends as well. BDS did make it clear that the goal is that the entity calling and asking questions to that dedicated phone line has used other resources as well as checked internally on their question to see if they can work through it and looked at other resources on the



BDS website. But if they were unable to find the answer, the individual that is assigned will triage the question and then help provide the contact information for the correct person.

Abby was asked about a direct phone line or email for families who had questions which was discussed at the BDS Advisory Council Meeting. Abby was not sure if that had been addressed.

Another member asked if the process for service agreement approval was
changing

and what the timeline for approval was. Abby shared that service agreements are currently being reviewed and approved by the regional liaisons, and that process is not changing. The regional liaisons are doing everything they can to review a budget and service agreement that's been submitted within 48 to 72 hours, provided that all of the required documentation has been provided to that regional liaison. Timing for approval can certainly range because of that, but the staff has been working extremely hard for that 48 to 72 hour mark.

Stephanie thanked Abby for her time and for staying longer than expected.

Approval of the March and May Minutes (Vote)

Stephanie moved back to the top of the agenda to address business that had not been taken care of in recent meetings. First was the approval of the March and May minutes

Tammy made a motion to approve the March meeting minutes. Emily seconded the motion.

Roll call votes:

- Sarah - abstain
- Rich - yes
- Jim - yes
- Emily - yes
- Jess - yes
- Ann - yes
- Tammy - yes
- Lisa - yes
- Lauren - yes
- Karen H - abstain
- Karen B - yes
- Pam - yes
- Carrie - yes

The motion passed. March minutes are approved.

Tammy made a motion to approve the May meeting minutes. Emily seconded the motion.

Roll call votes:

- Sarah - yes
- Rich - yes
- Jim - abstain
- Emily - yes
- Jess - abstain
- Ann - yes
- Tammy - yes
- Lisa - yes
- Lauren - yes
- Karen H - abstain
- Karen B - abstain
- Pam - yes
- Carrie - yes

The motion passed. May minutes are approved.

Committee Updates

Other Business and Announcements

In order to address everything necessary, Stephanie asked if the Council minded addressing Other Business and Announcements first, and then ending the meeting by returning to the BDS Update and discussing recreation. There were no objections.

- **Planning the July Meeting**

- Stephanie asked that if anyone has any ideas for topics of discussion for the July meeting to please send them to her and Brittany.

- **Other Business**

- **2021-2022 Annual Report (vote)**

- The Annual Report for October 2021-September 2022 was sent out to the full Council for review prior to the meeting. Upon approval the report will be sent to the state as well as posted on the website.

Rich made a motion to approve the report and Emily seconded.

Roll call votes:

- Sarah - abstain

- Rich - yes
- Jim - yes
- Emily - yes
- Jess - yes
- Ann - yes
- Tammy - yes
- Lisa - abstain
- Lauren - abstain
- Karen H - abstain
- Karen B - abstain
- Pam - yes
- Carrie - yes
- Cathy - abstain

The motion passed.

○ **Goodbye to Brittany and Recruiting New Support Person**

- A new support person will be hired with daytime flexibility for about 15 hours a week. The job description will be posted hopefully within the next week. This person will not support the Autism Council, Brittany will continue to work with them. Stephanie thanked Brittany for her work and agreed to send out the link to complete the online job application. She requested that members share it widely.

○ **Meeting with the Commissioner**

- Dates have been sent out to the full Council for a special meeting in July or August where the Council will have the opportunity to speak with the Commissioner to address concerns. Members were asked to let Stephanie and/or Brittany know as soon as possible which of the dates and times worked best for them. The plan currently is for this to be an additional meeting and not to replace the July or August Quality Council Meetings.

○ **Other Business**

- Stephanie let everyone know that the reimbursement and stipend pay out process is changing as of July, so it will take 1-2 months for individuals to actually receive their checks.

Public Comment

No Public Comment

BDS Update (revisited)

Family Support Council/Recreation funding

The Council had provided Jess with a list of questions for BDS that they would like addressed at this meeting. Jessica went through the questions:

1. How were recreational services funded prior to this change? Why is this change necessary?

BDS continues to learn and to partner with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. CMS is providing technical assistance to all of the States about allowable recreational services. This change is necessary, because the Bureau received very specific and very direct technical assistance from CMS around what can be covered through Medicaid funds, and specifically in relation to diversional or recreational services. This has led BDS to take a look at that technical assistance to determine what that means to our system and what needs to be updated and protect the federal funding and make sure that we're still eligible for that one.

2. Will the Bureau commit to dedicating funds, to be distributed by the Family Support Council, for recreational services?

The Bureau does commit funding for family support or general funds to the area agencies of that funding. They will allocate a certain amount to the family support council. So the Bureau does commit those funds.

a. If so, how much?

This is outlined within the contracts every 2 years. Jessica believes the new contract should be out shortly if they're not already listed to show what changes might have happened to the overall funding that's distributed to the area agencies. As Jessica understands it, that doesn't necessarily mean more of the overall state funding that goes to the can't be shared; it just means that is the minimum that should be moved from that general plan and allocation to the Family Support Council.

b. If not, can the Bureau commit to not referring people to the Family Support Council when they make requests for recreational funding? While there was funding, Jessica wanted to speak to the Bureau committing to not referring people to the Family Support Council when they make requests for recreational



funding. Jessica believes that if there are any resources out there, that referral should be made for individuals to follow up. This funding is available until it runs out .

3. Whether intended or not, the situation with recreational services is being perceived as a takeaway by families and individuals. Moving forward, what is BDS' strategic plan for promoting community integration?

One of the things BDS has done is look at how person centered planning and service planning is happening and what can be funded through Medicaid services. There seems to be a misconception that a person's life's goals and ambitions are the same as the service agreement and paid services. The state has procured a contractor to come into the state to conduct an assessment on both person centered planning and person service planning. This will look at where the state is now and where it wants to be. The intention is to heavily engage the Quality Council in this process

4. What is the strategic plan for a path to fully integrating the DD community into public life in accordance with our values? Please give details.

Jessica felt this was answered with the previous question. It was requested by members that once more information about the contract is approved that it be shared with the Council.

5. It has been posed before, but remains unanswered- according to He-M 519, Family Support funds are set aside to "provide services, activities and interventions, enumerated in He-M 519.04 (c), that are identified by a family to assist that family to remain the primary caregiver of an individual". Family Councils wouldn't be able to support activities for individuals whose primary caregivers are outside their families. Has the Bureau thought about how this will be handled?

Yes, Jess believes that at the last Family Support Council meeting, Lisa and the other members articulated that these are the parameters for when a request is considered. That doesn't mean that they will automatically just fund any request. Instead it will be considered if it is an appropriate request through the use of the criteria of the Family Support Council and they choose to fund it. Then they have the authority and the economy to do that. If the request doesn't meet their criteria, then again, they have that authority to deny it for not meeting that criteria.

The question was posed to Jess about what happens when someone does not meet the criteria to even be considered for the Support Council funds? Are they just not able to have



access to any state funds to support their community involvement? Jessica believes that this would be a case when general funds could be used but these funds are at the discretion of the area agency with guidelines in plans in the contracts as to what they can and can't be used for.

Jessica was also asked if there are discussions at the Bureau around the additional limitations in place by CMS around how people are able to participate in their community. Jessica stated that they have been trying a few different things. BDS is continuing to advocate with various partner agencies to find out what they can do to aid in advocacy and inquire how this is affecting other states. BDS is also looking at the use of non-Medicaid funding and how it is allocated.

Members brought up additional concerns about who is defining recreation, why community involvement was not covered and how to get funds to cover those activities. Jessica spoke to the issue of the determination of recreational vs service plan goals being met. She shared an example of an individual going bowling and that the goals addressed may be fine motor skills and socialization but this may not be able to be fully funded. Stephanie recognized that this was a serious issue that warranted further discussion but noted that in order to be respectful of everyone's time the conversation would need to continue at a later date.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:11 PM

Follow-up Tasks

- Send out Provider Readiness Meeting dates for families
- Send out the Annual Report to the appropriate State officials
- Schedule meeting with the Commissioner and send topics for conversation in advance
- Post job listing for new Admin.