



NHDSQC Meeting Minutes for July 15, 2026

Hybrid Meeting and In-Person.

Agenda:

Welcome and introduction (Emily Manire, Chair)

Chair Update & Announcements (Emily Manire, Chair)

Approval of June Meeting Minutes (Vote)

Bureau of Developmental Services Update (Jessica Gorton)

Approval of Bylaws & Annual Report (vote)

Committee Updates:

- System Review Committee (Emily & Stephanie)
- Rules Committee (Stephanie)
- Data Committee (Emily)
- Membership Committee (Isadora)
- Communications Committee (Karen?)
- Ad Hoc MAC committee
- Ad Hoc Staffing & Hiring Freeze Committee

Legislative Update

Other Business and Announcements

- Family Support Conference Update (Karen Blake & Lisa Steadman)
- Let Shanon know if you would like to receive a stipend

Public Comment



Quality Council Members and Attendance:

Jessica Gorton	Bureau of Developmental Services	Present In-Person
Abigail Conger (Alternate)	Bureau of Developmental Services	Not Present
Tammy Mills *	People First of New Hampshire	Present In-Person
Roseann Tardiff * (Alternate)	People First of New Hampshire	Not Present
Louis Esposito *	ABLE NH	Present Virtual
Krysten Evans (Alternate)	ABLE NH	No Present
Gina Cannon*	NH Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders	Present In-Person
Tammy Drew	Brain Injury Association, BIA	Not Present
Adam Schrier (Alternate)	Brain Injury Association, BIA	Not Present
Lauren Cole (Alternate)	Brain Injury Association, BIA	Present Virtual
Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre Chair of Membership Committee	NH Council on Developmental Disabilities (NHCDD)	Present In-Person
Pamela Stiles (Alternate)	NH Council on Developmental Disabilities (NHCDD)	Not Present
Jim Piet *	NH Council on Developmental Disabilities (NHCDD)	Present In-Person
Lisa Steadman * QC Vice Chair	State Family Support Council	Present In-Person
Karen Hatch * Chair of Recreation Committee	State Family Support Council	No Present
Karen Blake*	State Family Support Council	No Present
Donna Corriveau	Direct Support Provider	Present Virtual
Howard Clark	Area Agency Board, Monadnock Developmental Services	Present In-Person
Kelly Ehrhart *	Area Agency Board, Gateways Community Services	Present Virtual
VACANT	Area Agency Board	Position VACANT
Marissa Berg Housing Committee Chair	Community Support Network Inc. (CSNI)	No Present
Sandy Pelletier (Alternate	Community Support Network Inc. (CSNI)	Present In-Person
Emily Manire QC Chair & Data Committee Chair	Private Provider Network	Present In-Person
Kenda Howell (Alternate)	Private Provider Network	Not Present
Mary St. Jacques	UNH Institute on Disability, IOD	Present In-Person
Jen Sulewski (Alternate)	UNH Institute on Disability, IOD	Not Present
Stephanie Patrick	Disability Rights Center (DRC)	Present In-Person
Jennifer Bertrand*	At-Large Member Self - Advocate	Not Present



A Quorum was reached.

(*) Delineates family member of/or individual with a disability which counts toward an in-person quorum.

Guests or Members of the Public:

Guests; Lisa Beaudion & Jill Rooney

Welcome and introduction

All Council members and guests introduced themselves.

Chair Update & Announcements – Lisa Steadman

The Chair noted that there were no updates at this time.

Approval of June Meeting Minutes

Jim motioned to approve the minutes as written. Lisa second the motion.

- ✓ Motion passed with the following in favor; Jessica Gorton, Tammy Mills, Louis Esposito, Gina Cannon, Lauren Cole, Isadora Rodrigues-Legendre, Jim Piet, Lisa Steadman, Donna Corriveau, Kelly Ehrhart, Howard Clark, & Emily Manire
- ✓ Abstained; Sandy Pellitter
- ✓ Not present at the time of vote; Stephanie Patrick.

Bureau of Developmental Services Update - Jessica Gorton

Jessica reported that, within the next week or two, separate public comment sessions are expected to be held for each of the four proposed rules. Although they will be reviewed individually, the rules are all related to the day-to-day operations of the Developmental Services system.

- A member asked whether there were any updates on the hiring freeze waiver requests. Jessica responded that there were no new developments. For members who were not present at the previous meeting, she explained that because the state remains under a hiring freeze, the Bureau must submit waiver requests to fill vacant positions. Waiver requests for two vacant positions had been submitted approximately one month earlier, but no response had yet been received.

Jessica also shared a positive update on the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver renewal. The Bureau is in the final stages of responding to a Request for Additional Information (RAI) from CMS, which is typically one of the final steps before approval. She noted that this is a very encouraging development. In addition, the Bureau recently submitted the Acquired Brain Disorder (ABD) Waiver renewal to CMS. Since it was only recently submitted, it will likely be some time before any feedback is received.

- A member, Lisa, asked about recommendations that had been developed some time ago regarding Pediatric Medical Support (PDMS) services. She wondered whether those recommendations were still part of ongoing discussions.
- Jessica explained that the recommendations had been presented to the PDMS Committee. Through those discussions, it became clear that the issues could not be addressed in isolation. Instead, the Bureau determined that it would be more effective to evaluate self-directed services as a whole, looking broadly at opportunities for improvement, including reducing paperwork while continuing to meet increasing federal oversight and requirements related to self-directed services and family caregivers. As a result, the Bureau has not focused on implementing the individual recommendations but has instead stepped back to review the overall PDMS structure and identify broader opportunities for system improvements.
- Jessica added that although Abby was not present at the meeting, she would likely be willing to attend a future meeting to provide additional updates and answer questions about the ongoing PDMS work.
- Jessica provided an additional update regarding the Individual Home Supports (IHS) Handbook. She explained that the project is very close to being finalized. However, during the review process, the team decided to take a step back and broaden its scope. Rather than developing guidance solely for Individual Home Supports, they determined it would be more beneficial to examine all Participant-Directed and Managed Services (PDMS), since IHS is only one service within the broader self-directed service system.
- Instead of focusing on a single service, the workgroup chose to "zoom out" and take a comprehensive look at the full array of self-directed services. This broader approach is intended to create guidance that better reflects the entire self-directed service system. Jessica noted that, based on the latest information she had received, the handbook is now very close to completion.
- Jessica shared that the Institute on Disability (IOD) had hard copies of the *Rights Booklet*. The booklet has been available electronically, and printed copies are now available for service coordination agencies, area agencies, and other organizations that would like them.
- She encouraged members to contact Mary St. Jacques if their organization, or any individual or family they know, would like to receive printed copies. Jessica noted that the booklets are professionally bound with color covers and were developed collaboratively by the Institute on Disability and the statewide self-advocacy group representing individuals receiving developmental services.
- A member raised concerns about the future of Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) and referenced the *Olmstead* decision and recent discussions occurring within the disability community. The member expressed concern that decisions affecting community-based services could significantly impact individuals receiving supports and suggested that the developmental disabilities (DD) community and the independent living (IL) community work together on a coordinated advocacy and action plan. The member

noted that both communities share many of the same goals and challenges and could benefit from presenting a unified message about the importance of people living and receiving services in their communities.

- A member referenced an upcoming open house at Granite State Independent Living and asked whether the event, which included a panel discussion on person-directed services, was intended primarily for individuals already receiving independent living services or for a broader audience. The member also questioned whether raising concerns about *Olmstead* at the event might be viewed unfavorably by staff or leadership. Other members encouraged continued dialogue about protecting community-based services and emphasized the importance of collaboration between the DD and independent living communities.
- Stephanie also addressed the discussion regarding the Olmstead memorandum. She agreed that bringing advocates together to discuss the importance of community-based services is valuable but emphasized that the document currently being discussed is a Department of Justice memorandum, not a change in law.
- She explained that the protections established under the *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision remain in effect. Changing those protections would require a significant legal action, such as a new ruling by the United States Supreme Court that altered the interpretation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A Department of Justice memorandum does not have the legal authority to overturn or modify a Supreme Court decision.

Question was as to Jessica whether the public comment notices recently distributed for proposed rules He-M 526, He-M 527, He-M 528, and He-M 529 were the same public comment sessions being discussed earlier in the meeting. Jessica confirmed that they were and explained that the rules relate to Designated Receiving Facilities (DRFs).

- Another member suggested that future public comment notices would be more helpful if they included the title or subject of each rule in addition to the rule number. Jessica asked whether the notices had been distributed by the Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) or the Office of Administrative Rules. After learning they had come from BDS, she stated that she would pass along the feedback.
- Stephanie then provided additional context regarding the Designated Receiving Facility rules. She reminded members that the Rules Committee had previously reviewed the proposed rules and discussed whether to submit formal comments. After deliberation, the committee determined not to comment because the rules affect a relatively small population and the committee did not believe it had sufficient subject matter expertise to provide meaningful recommendations.
- Stephanie suggested that one constructive area for advocacy would be exploring whether New Hampshire could codify protections similar to those provided under the ADA into state law. Doing so could provide additional protections for individuals receiving services in New Hampshire, regardless of future changes at the federal level. She noted that other

states have begun considering similar legislative approaches and that such efforts would ultimately depend on the support of the Legislature and the Governor.

- While the *Olmstead* decision remains the law, the U.S. Department of Justice's announcement that it will no longer actively enforce *Olmstead* is nonetheless a significant concern. She explained that the absence of federal enforcement represents a substantial loss for the disability community because enforcement efforts have historically played an important role in protecting individuals' rights. At the same time, she emphasized the distinction between a change in enforcement priorities and a change in the law itself.
- Stephanie noted that the Department of Justice has not always led or intervened in *Olmstead* enforcement actions in every state. Although reduced federal involvement weakens oversight and advocacy, it does not eliminate the legal protections established by the *Olmstead* decision or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). She stressed, however, that advocates should remain clear-eyed about the practical consequences of reduced federal enforcement and the ripple effects that such policy changes may have on people with disabilities. She clarified that she was not disagreeing with the concerns that had been raised but rather adding important legal context and nuance to the discussion.

A council member then asked Emily whether an email had been sent regarding the formation of the ad hoc committees that had been approved during the previous meeting, specifically the committee addressing staffing shortages and the hiring freeze within the Department of Health and Human Services. The member recalled that Stephanie had recommended sending a follow-up email inviting members to participate and wondered whether they had missed it.

- Emily referred the question to Shanon, explaining that Shanon had been provided with several potential meeting dates and was planning to survey council members regarding their availability and interest in serving on the ad hoc committees.
- Shanon confirmed that the email had been sent. Several members indicated that they had not received it. Because neither of the ad hoc committees had met, members agreed that there was still time to organize participation.
- A request was made for Shanon to send a follow-up scheduling poll to the full Council for both ad hoc committees, the committee addressing systems issues and the committee focused on staffing shortages and the hiring freeze, to ensure that all interested members had an opportunity to participate. Shanon agreed to do so. One member also requested the date on which the original email had been sent so they could search their spam or junk mail folders.

Lisa raised concerns about a pattern she had begun noticing regarding Katie Beckett Medicaid (also known as Home Care for Children with Severe Disabilities (HCCSD) Medicaid) eligibility redeterminations. She explained that, over the previous three months, she had received phone calls, emails, and Facebook messages from four different families whose Medicaid benefits had either been terminated or not renewed during the redetermination process. She noted that several



of these families were not part of the developmental disabilities service system, making the trend particularly concerning.

- Lisa asked whether the Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) was tracking these cases, whether service coordinators were reporting similar concerns, and how the Bureau became aware of emerging issues affecting families.
- Jessica responded that BDS is aware of broader concerns related to Medicaid eligibility redeterminations resulting in the closure of Medicaid cases. However, she said the Bureau had not identified a trend specific to the Katie Beckett/HCCSD Medicaid category.
- Jessica described work that BDS had undertaken with the Bureau of Family Assistance during the previous year to simplify the transition for young adults moving from Katie Beckett Medicaid to Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled (APTD) Medicaid. She explained that the Bureau's position had been that individuals who had already completed the extensive medical eligibility review required through the developmental disabilities system should not have to undergo another nearly identical medical review simply because they were aging into a different Medicaid eligibility category. She noted that the Bureau of Family Assistance agreed with that approach, and the changes had helped prevent many unnecessary closures during those transitions.
- Jessica stated that she had not heard of a broader pattern involving Katie Beckett redetermination specifically. She encouraged families receiving developmental disability services to contact their BDS liaison, who could work directly with the Office of Medicaid to address individual cases. For families outside the developmental disabilities system, she asked that their information be shared with BDS so the Bureau could elevate concerns to the appropriate offices, including the Bureau of Family Assistance.
- Lisa responded that, in her experience, the recent increase in Katie Beckett cases represented a new and concerning trend. She emphasized that, prior to the previous three months, she had never received reports from families about widespread denials or terminations during Katie Beckett redeterminations. She described one family whose child lost Katie Beckett eligibility and was subsequently denied APTD Medicaid and is now appealing that decision. Of the four families she had been contacted by, only one was receiving developmental disability services.
- Lisa also shared that she had recently learned of another family whose child's in-home nursing services had been interrupted because a required document was reportedly not received during the renewal process. She expressed concern that many affected families may not know to contact BDS for assistance and urged the Department to examine whether a broader issue is emerging with Katie Beckett/HCCSD Medicaid eligibility and redeterminations.
- Jessica explained that issues involving Katie Beckett/HCCSD Medicaid eligibility fall outside the direct responsibilities of both the Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) and the Division of Long Term Supports and Services (DLTSS). She stated that any

broader policy response or outreach would ultimately be a matter for the Council to consider.

- Jessica suggested that, if the Council wished to pursue the issue, members could discuss what type of communication or outreach might be appropriate with the Bureau of Family Assistance (BFA). In the meantime, she reiterated that BDS is willing to assist families connected to the developmental disabilities system. She also welcomed referrals from families outside the DD system who are comfortable sharing their information so that BDS can elevate concerns to the Bureau of Family Assistance when appropriate.
- A member added an important clarification regarding the Medicaid appeals process. They explained that when a family is determined to be ineligible for Katie Beckett/HCCSD Medicaid during redetermination and has exhausted both internal appeal levels, the case proceeds to an administrative hearing. At that stage, the Office of Medicaid can no longer conduct an internal review because the matter is outside its authority and under the jurisdiction of the hearing process.

Emily thanked members for the discussion and noted that the Council could decide at a future meeting whether it wished to take up the issue formally. She observed that the Council frequently identifies emerging issues during meetings and suggested that, if there is sufficient interest, this topic could be assigned to an ad hoc committee for further review and recommendations.

- Emily reminded members that an email regarding the two newly formed ad hoc committees had been sent on June 23. Because the proposed meeting dates were scheduled for the following week, she acknowledged that many members may not have had enough notice to adjust their schedules.
- Emily stated that she and Shanon would develop a new list of meeting dates and times and distribute another scheduling poll. She encouraged all members who had expressed interest in serving on either ad hoc committee to watch for the email and respond promptly so that meeting times could be selected to accommodate as many participants as possible.

Approval of Bylaws & Annual Report (vote)

The Council reviewed the proposed revisions to the bylaws. Lisa noted that references indicating the bylaws were "proposed in February" would be updated to reflect the current review period.

Key proposed changes were highlighted, including:

- Allowing each Council member to designate an alternate to serve in their absence. It was noted that, unless otherwise specified, this change could also permit at-large members to appoint alternates, which is not currently allowed.
- Clarifying the appointment process for at-large members through the Member Relations Committee.
- Adding the Member Relations Committee as a permanent standing committee within the bylaws since it is referenced in the appointment process. Members discussed whether the



committee should be named the "Membership Committee" or the "Member Relations Committee." No change was made during the meeting, and the committee name remained "Member Relations Committee."

- A question was raised regarding whether the bylaws accurately reflected the Council's statutory responsibilities. Lisa explained that the committee intentionally referenced applicable RSA provisions rather than restating statutory language, ensuring that future changes to state law would not require corresponding bylaw amendments. She noted that, at the time of the committee's review, the bylaws were consistent with applicable statutes.
- Members also identified that the bylaws did not specify the term length for at-large members and acknowledged this should be addressed.
- A Council member asked whether the bylaws could be written in plainer language to improve accessibility. Lisa explained that the committee had made every effort to use plain language where possible and suggested that a Council orientation would provide an opportunity to review and explain the bylaws in greater detail. Emily agreed that a future orientation session for Council members would be beneficial.

Gina moved to adopt the bylaws as presented, with the addition of language addressing at-large member representation. Kelly seconded the motion.

Before the vote, Howard asked whether the bylaws should require periodic review. Members discussed whether reviews should occur every two years, every three years, or as needed. Lisa noted that bylaws are generally intended to be enduring documents and that many organizations review them every three to five years rather than on a fixed two-year schedule.

- ✓ The following were in favor; Tammy Mills, Gina Cannon, Jim Piet, Lisa Steadman, Kelly Ehrhart, & Stephanie Patrick.
- ✓ The following were not in favor; Jessica Gorton, Isadora Rodrigues-Legendre, Howard Clark & Emily Manire.
- ✓ Abstained; Louis Esposito, Lauren Cole, Donna Corrveau, & Sandy Pellitter.

Following approval of the bylaws, Isadora moved to amend the bylaws to require a review every three years, or as needed. Howard seconded the motion.

- Before voting, a member asked why references to diversity, equity, and inclusion had been removed from the bylaws. Emily explained that the language had been revised to align with terminology currently being accepted by various levels of government and stated that the change would not affect the Council's practices or commitment to inclusion.
 - ✓ The following were in favor; Jessica Gorton, Tammy Mills, Louis Esposito, Gina Cannon, Lauren Cole, Isadora Rodrigues-Legendre, Jim Piet, Lisa Steadman, Kelly Ehrhart, Howard Clark, Emily Manire. & Stephanie Patrick.
 - ✓ Abstained; Donna Corrveau & Sandy Pellitter.



2024–2025 Annual Report and identified several revisions and broader improvements before final approval.

Members noted several corrections to the current draft, including:

- Correcting Institute on Disability to remove an error in the organization's name.
- Updating references from Community Services to the Bureau of Family-Centered Services where appropriate.
- Using acronyms consistently throughout the report (either introducing all organizations with their acronyms or avoiding acronyms altogether).
- Renaming the Membership Committee to the Member Relations Committee.
- Including the Council's PDMS letter, as it was issued in May 2025 and falls within the reporting period.
- Correcting a typo identifying the Vice Chair.
- Updating the membership roster to accurately reflect Council membership during the reporting period.

Several members expressed concern that the report summarizes Council activities too broadly and does not fully reflect the amount of work completed during the year. Members noted that the Council is frequently asked what work it has accomplished and suggested the report should more comprehensively document:

- Rules and Regulations Committee recommendations and correspondence.
- Other Council recommendations and formal letters.
- Committee activities and accomplishments.
- Public statements and documents are issued on behalf of the Council.

Rather than summarizing these efforts, members recommended listing all formal recommendations and attaching supporting documents whenever possible.

Members also requested confirmation that all Rules and Regulations Committee letters and recommendations have been posted to the Council website, noting that some recent documents appear to be missing.

The discussion expanded to the status of prior annual reports. Members observed that reports for several previous years have not yet been finalized or posted and emphasized that annual reports are required under state law. Suggestions included:

- Reconstructing missing reports using meeting minutes, agendas, correspondence, and historical membership lists.



- Including Council correspondence and recommendations as appendices to preserve them even if website records change in the future.
- Using meeting agendas to recreate historical membership information where needed.

A member asked whether the Council has a formal process for building the annual report throughout the year rather than reconstructing it after the fact. It was noted that the current report follows a newer template, and future reports should be easier to maintain. Members discussed developing a more formal process that includes ongoing documentation of Council actions, recommendations, attachments, and supporting materials.

- The Chair acknowledged that reconstructing historical reports presents challenges due to changes in administrative staff, filing systems, and recordkeeping practices. However, members agreed that completing the missing reports remains important.
- The Chair recommended referring to the broader discussion to the Executive Committee to develop a process for completing the outstanding annual reports and establishing a consistent approach for future reports. The Executive Committee will return with recommendations for Council consideration at a future meeting.
- Members agreed that, while historical reports may not be perfect, it is important to complete them with the available information, publish them, and establish a reliable process moving forward.

Committee Updates:

System Review Committee (Emily & Stephanie)

The Systems Review Committee reported that last month's meeting included a productive discussion with Jennifer Johnson, Jennifer Jones, and other presenters. The committee thanked the participants for their contributions.

The Office of Planning and Legal Services, which was unable to attend the previous meeting, is now scheduled to present at the July meeting along with the Office of the Public Guardian.

The committee also revisited its goal of including a presentation from either the Attorney General's Office or a County Attorney's Office to better understand how abuse and neglect investigations intersect with the criminal justice system. Despite numerous outreach efforts by both the committee chair and staff, the committee has been unable to secure a presenter. One final request will be made to the Attorney General's Office in hopes of scheduling a presentation for August.

- Members acknowledged that the absence of this perspective leaves an important gap in the committee's review of the system. One member suggested documenting the repeated outreach efforts in the committee's final report if no presentation can be arranged.
- Another suggested contacting individuals who authored articles related to the issue, as they may be able to facilitate connections.



- The committee reiterated that its goal is to present final recommendations at the September Council meeting.

Looking ahead, the committee hopes to invite Commissioner Lori Weaver to attend the October full Council meeting. Historically, the Commissioner has provided an overview of Department priorities and challenges, and the October timing would allow discussion of the Systems Review Committee's recommendations and potential next steps.

Members were also reminded that the Systems Review Committee would meet on Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. to continue developing recommendations. Staff agreed to resend the meeting invitation after it was noted that some members had not received the Zoom link.

Rules Committee (Stephanie)

The Rules and Regulations Committee did not meet in July, as there were no pending rules requiring immediate review. The committee also decided not to submit comments on the DRF rules.

The committee is currently awaiting the revised Licensing and Certification rules following the recent public hearing. The committee chair attended the hearing and reported that the Department indicated the updated draft would be released within the next few weeks.

Once the revised draft is available, the Rules and Regulations Committee will determine whether the changes adequately address the public comments submitted or whether additional action is warranted.

Because the Licensing and Certification rules are moving on an expedited timeline and must be considered by JLCAR before the emergency rules expire in mid-September, the chair noted that action may be required before the next full Council meeting. The Council discussed the possibility of authorizing either the Executive Committee or the Rules and Regulations Committee to act on the Council's behalf if timing makes it impractical to wait for the next Council meeting.

The chair committed to keeping the full Council informed as the rulemaking process progresses and anticipated that the timing would likely allow the Council to discuss the matter at its August meeting before JLCAR takes final action.

Data Committee (Emily)

The Data Committee provided a brief update and welcomed Louis as the new Chair of the Data Committee. Members expressed appreciation for his willingness to take on the role.

Louis shared that the committee is essentially working toward a “reset” to create a more organized and consistent approach to data collection and review. The committee’s primary goal is to develop a data matrix that identifies:



- What data the committee should receive and review each month.
- Expected timelines for receiving information.
- A consistent process for reviewing data before presenting updates to the full Quality Council.

The committee is working to establish a clearer system for determining whether missing data is due to requests not being made, delays in receiving information, or other barriers. The goal is to create stronger accountability and consistency around data collection.

The committee also plans to connect this process with the Council's website by creating a centralized location where collected data can be accessed by Council members and the public. This would make information easier to locate and improve transparency, rather than requiring individuals to search through meeting materials and minutes to find historical data.

Louis noted that the work is still in progress, including updating committee email lists and membership information. Members may receive additional meeting invitations and updates as the committee continues to refine its processes.

The committee noted that improved data organization will also support the Council's annual reporting process by creating a repository of information that can be used when documenting Council activities and accomplishments.

Members were reminded that additional participants are welcome to join the Data Committee. Once the data matrix is developed, it will be shared with the full Council and made available to the broader community. Members are also encouraged to attend Data Committee meetings if there are specific topics they would like the committee to explore in greater depth.

The committee is exploring additional presentations for the full Quality Council:

- Olivia May may be invited to present at the September Council meeting to provide updates from her office.
- Commissioner Weaver is being considered for an October Council meeting presentation, with November as a potential alternative if scheduling is an issue.

A member asked whether the Commissioner's presentation would be the only agenda item for that meeting. It was noted that the agenda structure will be determined closer to the meeting date.

Membership Committee (Isadora)

The Membership Relations Committee reported that it has not met recently. The committee continues to monitor vacancies and recruitment efforts for the New Hampshire Developmental Services Quality Council.



There is currently one pending Governor appointment and two additional vacancies for the Council. Members noted that the number of vacancies increased after Kelly transitioned to an Area Agency board position.

The committee discussed the need to continue recruiting individuals with:

- Lived experience with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Family members of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Other individuals who may bring valuable perspectives to the Council.

Members were reminded that applications are available on the Council website, and anyone interested in learning more about serving on the Council is encouraged to reach out to the Membership Relations Committee chair for additional information before applying.

One remaining vacancy continues to be the Governor-appointed enhanced family care provider seat. This position is intended for someone who is currently providing enhanced family care to an individual in their home. The committee acknowledged that this position has historically been difficult to fill due to the time commitment required, including attending Wednesday morning meetings and participating in committee work.

The committee welcomes recommendations of individuals who may be interested and is available to discuss the role and expectations with prospective applicants.

Members discussed expanding recruitment efforts beyond simply posting applications on the website. It was noted that individuals typically do not search a website looking for council opportunities, and that more proactive outreach through:

- Social media.
- Partner organizations.
- Council member networks.
- Community organizations.

Members discussed creating recruitment materials, including a potential Canva graphic, that could be shared through member organizations and social media platforms. A member volunteered to create a draft recruitment flyer if needed, which could then be reviewed by staff and Council leadership before distribution.

The group also discussed whether materials could be prepared for upcoming Disability Pride events. It was suggested that once the recruitment flyer is approved, copies could be printed and made available for outreach activities.

Members expressed concern about delays in Governor appointments and the impact those delays have on the Council's ability to fully function. While the Council may technically continue to



meet quorum requirements, members noted that vacant seats make it difficult to fully staff committees and complete the Council's work.

- Members emphasized that filling vacancies is important not only for representation but also for ensuring committees have enough participation to function effectively.
- Staff will continue following up regarding the pending appointment and will explore additional ways to elevate the urgency of filling the vacant seats.

Communications Committee (Karen)

Kelly provided an update on the Communications Committee. Due to the length of the document (three pages) and time constraints, she had forwarded the update to Shannon for distribution. Kelly noted that she had only received the document that morning and would provide highlights rather than review the full report.

The purpose of the Communications Committee is to support the New Hampshire Quality Council by improving how information is shared with council members, individuals and families receiving services, providers, Area Agencies, state partners, advocacy organizations, and the broader developmental disabilities community. The committee's goals are to increase awareness of the Quality Council's role, strengthen transparency, and make council information easier to find, understand, and use.

The committee's scope includes reviewing communication practices, identifying communication challenges, establishing operating practices, and developing initial priorities. Potential communication channels include:

- The Quality Council website
- Approved meeting minutes, agendas, and plain-language summaries
- Email distribution lists and stakeholder networks
- BDS weekly updates
- The recurring Quality Council Corner
- Approved social media platforms
- Partner organizations, Area Agencies, provider networks, family support councils, and advocacy groups

Kelly shared that she had forwarded the document to Shanon so members would have an opportunity to review it and provide feedback. She noted that Karen, who helped develop the document, was unable to attend due to illness, and Kelly was the only Communications Committee member present.

Members discussed the importance of ensuring there is no duplication of effort between the Communications Committee and the Data Committee, particularly around posting information, improving accessibility, and sharing updates. It was suggested that both committees remain mindful of overlapping responsibilities as their work continues.



The council discussed the importance of bringing the Communications Committee's purpose and scope document before the full Quality Council for review and approval. A concern was raised regarding wording that could suggest the Communications Committee has authority to approve council communications independently. It was clarified that, consistent with other Quality Council committees, committees do not have delegated authority to act on behalf of the full council; rather, they develop recommendations and bring items forward to the full council for approval.

Kelly clarified that the document may not have been summarized exactly as written and encouraged members to review the full document once distributed. The committee will determine its meeting schedule once additional members are available.

Google Drive Storage

Shanon brought forward a time-sensitive administrative matter regarding Google Drive storage capacity. The current storage allocation is approximately 96% full, requiring an increase in storage capacity to maintain records.

- The proposed cost is \$16.99 for an additional 100 gigabytes for the first year, with an estimated renewal cost of \$19.99 annually thereafter. Additional increases would be available if needed in the future.
- Discussion followed regarding whether there was an available budget line item. Members noted that maintaining adequate storage is necessary for record retention and council operations.

Howard motioned to increase the Google Drive Storage. Gina seconded the motion.

- ✓ The following were in favor; Jessica Gorton, Tammy Mills, Louis Esposito, Gina Cannon, Lauren Cole, Isadora Rodrigues-Legendre, Jim Piet, Lisa Steadman, Kelly Ehrhart, Howard Clark, Sandy Pellitter, Emily Manire. & Stephanie Patrick.
- ✓ Abstained; Donna Corrveau

Ad Hoc MAC committee

Ad Hoc Staffing & Hiring Freeze Committee

The Ad Hoc Medicaid Advisory Council (MAC) and Ad Hoc Staffing Committees remain on hold and have not yet met. Updates from those committees will be added to future agendas once meetings occur.

Legislative Update

Discussion was held regarding the Governor's veto of the ASD bill. Members noted that the vote was closer than expected and discussed the possibility, although unlikely, that the bill could still move forward despite the veto. Members agreed that the situation should continue to be monitored.



Jessica provided an update regarding SB 670, which has been signed into law. One of the most significant components of the legislation is the establishment of a Developmental Services Oversight Commission. Members were encouraged to monitor developments related to the commission and future appointments.

Jessica also highlighted several changes related to the Adult Protective Services (APS) registry for abuse, neglect, and exploitation:

- Under the new law, individuals with a founded report of abuse, neglect, or exploitation will be placed on the registry while any due process or appeal processes are ongoing. Previously, individuals could complete all due process steps before being placed on the registry.
- The process will now operate similarly to the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) registry process.
- Provider agencies, staff, volunteers, and other applicable individuals will now be required by statute to check the registry annually. Previously, checks were required at hire, with Developmental Services rules requiring checks every other year.

Jessica noted that additional guidance is expected prior to the effective date of August 31, as there are still operational questions, including how pending appeals and current cases will be handled. The Bureau of Adult and Aging Services is working through implementation details and hopes to avoid a large influx of registry checks occurring all at once.

- Members were encouraged to review the legislation, as there are additional components impacting both developmental services and other systems. Jessica also noted there may be new reporting requirements related to serious injuries and deaths of individuals receiving residential services.
- Members asked whether there was any information regarding who would be appointed to the new SB 670 Oversight Commission and how individuals or organizations could express interest in serving.
- It was noted that no additional information was available yet, as the legislation had only recently been signed. Members shared that they had seen outreach from area agencies encouraging interested individuals to contact the Governor's Office.

The Disability Rights Center (DRC) shared that additional notification requirements were established to ensure they receive information regarding serious injuries and deaths within certain state-funded systems. This will allow DRC to determine whether further investigation or review is necessary.

Other Business and Announcements

- Suggestion to use Rally as an alternative scheduling platform to Doodle, as Doodle is no longer offering a free option. Rally was suggested as a free tool that may make scheduling meetings more efficient.



- A member shared information regarding the City of Concord Green Space Committee's upcoming walk audit of Loudon Road. The committee is seeking participation from Concord residents, particularly members of the disability community, to identify accessibility concerns.
 - A training session is scheduled for August 25; however, participation in the training is not required to participate in the walk audit.
 - The walk audit will take place on a weekday in September, with the date still to be determined.
 - The audit will occur between approximately 4:30 and 6:00 PM to capture higher traffic conditions.
 - Information gathered will be provided to the Planning Board and City Council as part of the city's master planning process.
- Members suggested reaching out to Community Bridges, particularly due to a planned accessible housing project near Loudon Road, to determine whether residents or future residents may want to participate.
- Autism Council and Quality Council Funding Discussion
 - Members discussed the future of the Autism Council and Quality Council funding structure. With the Autism Council expected to continue operating, members noted that there will need to be a future conversation regarding funding allocations between the two councils.
 - Historically, when the Autism Council was not meeting, Quality Council received the majority of funding, which supported activities such as member stipends. Members noted that the Autism Council would like to explore the possibility of having funding available for similar purposes.
 - A future budget discussion is planned with representatives from both councils, and the topic will be brought forward for additional discussion.
- Right to know Request and Release of Personal Information
 - Louis raised concerns regarding information released in response to a Right-to-Know request involving the Quality Council and Autism Council.
 - Louis shared that information obtained through the request was later posted publicly online, including personal identifying information such as Social Security numbers. While acknowledging the public's right to access government records, he expressed concern about the release and public sharing of sensitive personal information.
 - Members discussed whether additional review or guidance should be sought regarding what information is appropriate to release in response to Right-to-Know requests and whether additional safeguards should be considered.



- Emily shared that she had recently become aware of the issue and had reached out to Marissa, as a fellow council chair, to discuss potential next steps and ways to safeguard information moving forward.

Public Comments

- Medicaid Recertification and Staffing Concerns
 - A member shared concerns regarding difficulties contacting Medicaid related to a SNAP and Medicaid recertification.
- The member reported:
- Missing a scheduled Medicaid phone interview because the call was not received.
 - Having to contact the district office and wait approximately 15 minutes on hold to reschedule.
 - Experiencing additional delays when contacting fuel assistance, including a 45-minute wait without receiving an answer.
 - Having to visit offices in person to obtain required documentation.
- The member expressed concern that staffing shortages and the hiring freeze may be impacting timely access to services. They noted that delays in Medicaid recertification could result in loss of Medicaid eligibility and potentially impact eligibility for the Developmental Disability waiver.
 - Members suggested that these concerns may be appropriate for the ad hoc staffing and hiring freeze committee to review.

Let Shanon know if you would like to receive a stipend.

The meeting adjourned at 12:07PM