

NHDSQC Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2024

In Person Meeting Location: UNH Institute on Disability, Concord, NH
Online: ZOOM

Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Welcome Director Melissa Hardy

Discussion of HHS Oversight Report and other BDS Data (Melissa Hardy, Director, LTSS)

BDS Updates (Jessica Gorton)

Waiver Comments Discussion

Committee Updates: Submitted in writing ahead of meeting.

- Data (Emily Manire)
- Rules and Regulations (Stephanie Patrick)
- Members Relations (Adrienne Evans)
- Person Centered Planning (Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre)
- CIS/Recreation (Karen Hatch)
- Housing (Marissa Berg)
- Support Coordination (Adrienne Evans)

Other Business and Announcements

- Chair/Vice Chair Position
- Stipend reminder
- Planning the April meeting
- Meeting logistics
- Review of Council By-Laws
- Pre-Meeting: Tuesday prior to full meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom.

Public Comment

Introductions

Quality Council Members Meeting Status

Name	Organization/Representing	Meeting Status
Jessica Gorton	Bureau of Developmental Services	Present In-Person
Tammy Mills *	People First of New Hampshire	Present In-Person
Krystan Evans (Alternate)	ABLE NH	Not Present
Sarah Tollefson	ABLE NH	Present Virtual
Adrienne Evans * Member Relations Committee Chair	Autism Council	Present Virtual
Adam Schrier	Brain Injury Association, BIA	Present In-Person
Krystal Chase (Alternate)	Brain Injury Association, BIA	Not Present
Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre QC Vice Chairperson	NH Council on Developmental Disabilities (NHCDD)	Not Present
Pamela Stiles (Alternate) *	NH Council on Developmental Disabilities (NHCDD)	Present In-Person
Jim Piet *	NH Council on Developmental Disabilities (NHCDD)	Present In-Person
Lisa Steadman *	State Family Support Council	Present In-Person
Karen Hatch *	State Family Support Council	Present Virtual
Debra Opramolla *	State Family Support Council	Not Present
Donna Corriveau	Direct Support Provider	Present Virtual
Rich Crocker	Area Agency Board, Lakes Region Community Services	Present Virtual
Cathy Spinney *	Area Agency Board, Community Crossroads	Present, Virtual
Ann Sanok *	Area Agency Board, One Sky	Not Present
Marissa Berg Housing Committee Chair	Community Support Network Inc. (CSNI)	Present In-Person
Emily Manire Data Committee Chair	Private Provider Network	Present In-Person
Mary St. Jacques	UNH Institute on Disability, IOD	Present In-Person
Jennifer Sulewski (Alternate)	UNH Institute on Disability, IOD	Not Present
Stephanie Patrick QC Chairperson	Disability Rights Center (DRC)	Present In-Person
Kelly Ehrhart *	At Large Member Self-Advocate	Present Virtual

A QUORUM WAS REACHED

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

Guests in Attendance

Melissa Hardy	Director, DHHS Long-Term Supports and Services	In-Person
Irene Tyler	Member of the Public	Virtual
Sarah Koutroubous	Member of the Public	Virtual
Karen Blake	Member of the Public	Virtual
Sandy Rickly	Member of the Public	Virtual
Julie Lago	Member of the Public	Virtual
Mali Kapilan	Member of the Public	Virtual
Tracey Walbridge	Member of the Public	Virtual
Trisha Frazier	Member of the Public	Virtual
Holly Carmen	Member of the Public	Virtual
Carrie Duran	Quality Council Administrator	Virtual

Discussion with Melissa Hardy, Director of LTSS, DHHS

(Please note: The list of questions is provided below)

Hardy: What are your concerns or priorities?

- Member :Ensuring people are being served and not just by their own families.

Hardy: Data is key and improving technology is the goal. We need to ask the right questions and track it properly. Once data is received how do we process it and move forward. Families are the backbone of the service delivery system.

- Member: Keep data on where all money is going.
- Member: Tracking data is challenging because there are too many systems to integrate.

Hardy: NH EASY is the key to gathering all data and ensuring all providers and coordinators have access.

- Member: Quality needs to focus on being an involved member of the community and person-centered planning.
- Member: My concern is the workforce shortage and communicating the needs to lawmakers.

Hardy: AARPA monies: Workforce and Retention

- Contracts: 27 total contracts totaling \$10.9 million dollars with home and community-based providers. We are hoping more providers apply for the grants. AARPA is one time money. We have more RFPs for grants available.
- What is the money being used for?
 - * Residential provider is contracting with another provider to schedule their DSP's days more efficiently. Tailoring the workforce based on the needs of the Direct Support Provider to be flexible with their work schedules.
 - * There are lots of creative programs including; mentoring programs, community outreach, social media campaigns for recruitment, targeted trainings, DSP training, career training, college, and high school outreach, creating a pipeline of future employees, retirement, chrome books, laptops, car detailing for those using their personal car.
 - * Monthly progress notes are submitted by providers.
 - * Next step: How do we communicate what has worked best from provider to provider?

* Use the data and share best practices.

- Member: Follow up on original AARPA letter from the council inquiring about PDMS families whose employees did not receive recruitment and retention funds. The Quality Council is requested updated information on how this gap will be addressed.

Question: Demographics

Hardy: We do not have the system in place to track the data on demographics. We are working on the technology to be able to do that. We do not have any data on this at this time.

- Member: Deloitte follow up. Will there be a person at the department who will be available to track data.

Hardy: We do have an IT employee who is new in the position. Deloitte contract is longer term.

Question: Data on who is underserved or not served

Hardy: We are still working on that. Our current system is not sufficient in real time. We need further development. It is part of Phase Three goals.

- Member: What is your timeline for Phase Three?

Gorton: Late summer or fall and will continue to improve with an eye on quality.

Hardy: New system development: We want to be mindful of bringing in providers and service providers to make it easier for the workforce, family members, DHHS staff and the area agency.

We are rebuilding the system with Deloitte.

- Member: We need to take a further look at employment data and break it down into smaller pieces that are clearer to understand.
- Member: Do we have a BETA pilot group?

Hardy: We do not have a plan for a pilot group for phase three.

Gorton: We are looking for feedback as we develop the technology.

- Member: Is there a consideration for service coordinators to document the lack of providers in NH EASY?

Gorton: It has been discussed and will be looked at further in phase three.

Hardy: CFI side has the option for “no provider available”.

Gorton: Funding date – start date entered should be added into our data system.

Hardy: The goal is true data such as how do we define family members filling in while staff is found.

- Member: We need to track why individuals are being underserved. Data is important.

Question: PDMS Model – How many families are staffing their own loved ones program due to workforce shortage?

Hardy: We do not have the data available.

- Member: We have significant concerns about families being forced into PDMS because of lack of staff. We need to make sure families understand the legalities and responsibilities of being their own employer.

Hardy: It is a lot to manage. We agree.

- Member: Are we tracking who is the employee of record?

Gorton: It would be captured in the service agreement. We are not tracking this currently. We partner with the Area Agency if we need the information.

Hardy: Intake process: Making sure families know what their options are. Families have asked for a menu of the options available.

- Member: Follow up requested in the form of a summary of the options and terms available such as employee of record.
- Member: Can we pull data on the percentage of budget of staff line of ISA's.

Gorton: It is not tracked on state level.

- Member: It would be a good indicator of lack of staffing.

Gorton: Agreed, we should add as part of our data. Discussions are being had with families and providers this is an issue.

Hardy: We are committed to creating a data system that works for everyone.

- Member: Stated they are part of an ESS manual committee and will be using the model to inform PDMS families as well.
- Member: We would like you to give an update on your service on this committee at a future QC meeting.

Gorton: We are committed to improving our data capture to help families.

Question: Track data for families who are underemployed due to caregiving for their family members.

This question was not answered due to lack of time during the meeting. QC asks Melissa Hardy to submit an update in writing.

Question: What items are you doing to manage the mitigate the staffing crisis.

This question was not answered due to lack of time during the meeting. QC asks Melissa Hardy to submit an update in writing.

Question: How can the Quality Council partner with BDS?

Hardy: Quality Council and the organizations they represent is a valuable resource of information and feedback. Open and honest conversations need to happen and work together on budget, legislative. Not duplicating work or committees. Continue an open line of communication. Feedback on the budget is requested. We are a collective community. The workforce shortage is the number one issue for families.

Feedback from Members:

Member: We appreciate Jessica Gorton's contribution to the Quality Council and her commitment to collaboration.

- Very informative conversation. More information about the manual committee is needed.
- DEIA collaboration. What are all the committees that BDS is involved with for improvement. More communication is needed so efforts are not duplicated.
- Family Advocacy: targeted to individuals who do not have family members to speak for them. Develop a list of some of the feedback you have already received and what the progress is. Snapshot of how you are incorporating the feedback of families.
- More transparency in the future is appreciated. Families need access to their own data.
- Concerned about the current political climate and our trend to potentially go back to institutions.
- Concerned about going back to institutional care. It should be on all of our minds. Guest speaker thanked for being here and innovate thought is appreciated.

- Thank you for coming and we encourage you to come more often. We would like to hear more about future projects.
- I like the new level of transparency and hope the movement continues.
- More flexibility is needed for self-advocates with what to do with their budget and make their own decisions. Thank you for coming.
- Recreation and current legislation update are important.
- Keep on the radar of any decision, please ask yourself the questions: How does this affect the person and the family? Do not create burdensome documentation.

New Hampshire Bureau of Developmental Services Update

Jessica Gorton, BDS

Announcements:

- Lauri Vachon is now the Chief Operating Officer for Long-Term Supports and Services.
- Lindsay McGee is the new waiver manager.
- Actively recruiting for Laurie Vachon's previous position.

Feedback and Listening sessions:

*Family listen session

* Service coordination listening session

*Provider listening session

*Area Agency Executive Director listening session

*Will distribute all the feedback upon completion of listening sessions.

*Provider agency survey

*Area Agency survey

*Case Management Listening session

The goal is to continue having listening sessions on a regular basis to ensure collective feedback.

*Center for Medicaid Services Desk Audit on In-Home Supports

* On sight audit in May from CMS for DD Waiver and TBI Waiver

* Person Centered Planning Subcommittee: Developing on a grant to help with the work of ensuring individuals know about PCP.

- Member: Workbook called "It's My Choice" is a good resource for individuals to use toward Person Centered Planning. Some info could be out of date. NH should create a workbook that is updated and modern.

QC Chair: Questions for BDS Update should be sent to chair ahead of the meeting so we can maximize our time.

Chair question to BDS: Family support dollars and camperships. What is happening?

Gorton: BDS does not oversee Family Support. Send questions to Dee Dunn Tierney.

Hardy: Hot topic is camperships. The process for Family Support Councils to pay for camperships has not changed.

- Member: families are getting a different message. What do we do?

Hardy: Reach out to us or to your area agency.

- Member: We were told families must pay upfront for camperships and then be reimbursed. Our families are not able to do that. This model affects our fiscal year budgets and puts a burden on families. Was this put into the contracts with the Area Agency? Can we reverse it? RSA 126: Flexible dollars with our Family Support budgets. It is incorporated into our rules and regulations after the closing of the Laconia State School.

Hardy: This came up about the Family Support Conference and Camperships and the different fiscal years with the budget. We have heard from you and met with the Area Agencies and explained there is no change in that mechanism.

- Member: We are concerned every Area Agency runs differently and their cash flow process is different.

Hardy: Each area agency and family support councils operate differently. We are working with area agencies in ensuring families continue to have access to family support dollars.

Member: We would like to work collaboratively. And feel the problem is not resolved.

Member: For more information, please attend the State Family Support Council meeting next week.

Waiver and Rules Comments

- How do we want to handle reviewing our rules and waiver comments?
- If you would like to be more involved, please attend the Rules Committee Meeting.
- 11:00 a.m. on the 2nd Friday.
- Will review in May meeting.
- Please review and get back to me.
- Members requested the Rules Committee hold a second meeting for council members to discuss waivers in between April and May meeting.

Committee Updates

Committee Chairs are asked to submit an update in writing before the meetings.

Member Relations: Cathy Spinney

The committee received two applications to consider. The Membership Committee requested a vote on an application at today's meeting.

The Chair declined to add this to the agenda and stated that voting on new members needs to be on the agenda and new member applications need to be forwarded to members in advance of a meeting where a vote will be taken.

Person Centered Planning: Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre

- Did not submit a written update.

Community Integrated Services (CIS) Recreation Letter, Karen Hatch

- Did not submit a written update.

Housing Committee: Marissa Berg

- We have a survey. Does the entire QC committee have to vote on it?
- QC Chair: Yes. Please submit it for our next meeting to be considered.

Service and Support Coordination Sub-Committee: Adrienne Evans

- Did not meet due to not finding a day that worked for everyone.

Rules Committee: Stephanie Patrick

- Update submitted in writing and attached to meeting materials.

Other Business

- Chair/Vice Chair Position
 - Anyone interested in learning more about the Chair and Vice Chair position to contact Stephanie Patrick or Carrie Duran for more information.
 - Chair position is a wonderful opportunity for leadership skills.
- Pre-Meeting

- First pre-meeting held the Tuesday before the meeting. Carrie Duran will hold one each month to review the agenda and answer any questions before the full meeting.
- Stipend: Reminder to send paperwork to Stephanie Patrick and contact Carrie Duran for support in completing the forms.
- March meeting topics: What is your input?
 - Person Centered Planning Update**
 - In-Home Support Manual discussion**
 - Family Support Council Budget concerns**

Public Comments

Quality Council Applicant Julie Lago thanked the committee for being able to attend the meeting and appreciated the discussion about the mental health of families and the impact between systems.

Meeting Adjourned

Jim Piet made the motion to adjourn. Mary St. Jacques seconded the motion.
The meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

*Minutes Respectfully submitted by:
Carrie Duran, Council Administrator
April 7, 2024*