

Autism Task Force Meeting

July 13, 2015

Polycom connected at 10:00 a.m.

Task Force Members Present: Trisha Page, Karen Tescher, Nancy Ulrich-Crotty, Gerry Teevens, Kim Hruby, Teresa Larsen, Carol Johnson, MaryAnn Jaeger, Cathy Haarstad

Others Present: Mark Doerner, Lynn dodge, Kirsten Dvorak, Amanda Carlsen, Kodi Pinks, Lorena Poppe, Marisa Misek, Vicki Peterson, Rebekka Freije, Kare Magie, Paula Hinton, Jennifer Restameyer, Sandy Smith, Margie Gray, Jeannie Krull, Mary _____, Barb Stanton, Joan Karpenko, Lisa Boxrud, Lisa Boxer

Minutes from May 2015 were reviewed and motion to approve by Kim Hruby with the following changes.

- Cathy Haarstad's name will be spelled with a "C" and not a "K"; and
- Addition of who attended the meeting.

A handout was given to show where the group stands overall per the discussion at the May 2015 Task Force meeting. Steps to begin initiating action were discussed. The group is looking to:

- Big picture state—level agencies
- Add public and private organizations that provide services. (i.e. public non-profits, hospitals)
- Add general education to DPI section
- Advocacy groups-where would they be advantageous in initiating action?
- Add evaluation and diagnostic teams under Autism Services.
- Family Support for individuals and families.

Trisha presented Phase I, "Initiate Action," of the Collective Impact Study.

- Early intervention and transition are the two biggest issues
- Families cannot afford, or have trouble finding, specialized daycare.
- Juvenile and adult justice system, out of home placement, foster care
- Need consistency across the State as to who can make an ASD determination.
- Need minimum standards as autism is displayed differently in each person.
- Is it Task Force business to streamline how therapies are categorized?
- A good appeal system needs to be in place for those who feel they are not being heard.
- A good checks and balance system is needed.
- Socioeconomic impact for working families who make too much to qualify for services.
- Agencies to take on, individually the transition phase within the individual communities.
- Not enough access to providers.
- Collaboration important to overcome gaps in services.

- Should an expert panel be convened to discuss the above?

NALC (National Autism Leadership Collaborative):

- Allows us to look at how we are like other states
- Where we need to go towards working together
- Provides quality indicators which help to show where strengths and deficits are and how to come together

Legislative updates:

- August 19, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. the legislative study on DHS Behavioral Health will be discussed.

Department of Health:

Autism clinics contracts have been extended through September 30, 2015.

During the legislative session, CSHS staff were involved with the following legislative bills (e.g., tracked, monitored, or testified):

SB 2176 (Autism Database)– The ASD expert panel meeting that was convened in October raised concerns that language in NDCC 23-01-41 was potentially too restrictive and might hinder reporting into the ASD database. The panel recommended that the following areas be addressed during the 2015 legislative session prior to the database being fully implemented. The sections that needed to be addressed included the criteria for qualified reporters, the complete physical evaluation, and the use of a designee to report. SB 2176 did pass and was signed by the governor. It is the department's expectation to have the ASD database implemented by the end of the biennium. The department is finalizing Administrative Rules for the ASD database.

- The expectant go live date for the ASD database is August 2015.
- The Public hearing for the Administrative Rules was held on 6/30/15. There were no comments made at the hearing but comments could be submitted through 7/15/15.
- Family and provider brochures are available for dissemination.
- Links are set up on website for families regarding FAQs.
- Providers will receive training for electronic Reporting.
- State mandated reporting.
 - Concern that providers won't accept patient seeking autism diagnosis because of having to fill out the required form.
 - Some parents want to be included in reporting and others do not.
 - Concern that an ASD diagnosis will not be made due to having to fill out paperwork.

- Kodi advised that it should only take 5 to 10 minutes to fill out the electronic form (20 to 30 minutes to fill out paper form) and wording was placed into the administrative rules to allow for support staff to fill out the form.

SB 2012 (DHS budget) –The DHS Medicaid budget approved in SB 2012 also impacts CSHS even though the CSHS division is located in the ND DoH. CSHS uses the MMIS to pay claims and generally follows Medicaid guidelines for reimbursement. When Medicaid requests provider inflationary increases in their budget, it impact CSHS, as providers paid by CSHS get paid at the same rate as Medicaid. A 4% and 4% provider increase was approved for the biennium in the Medicaid budget, which CSHS will also need to absorb. Family Voices of ND and Federation of Families funding was also included in SB 2012. Each received \$75,000 for family information, training, and support activities. CSHS also provides funding to Family Voices of ND and ND Hands and Voices for similar activities on behalf of children with special health care needs and their families.

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DPI updates:

- New website as of July 15, 2015
- Second Transition Interagency Conference
 - November 19th and 19th at the Ramada Inn & Hotel in Bismarck, ND
 - Keynote Speakers: Melinda Jacobs, Esquire and Mallory Sear an Advocate
 - Accepting requests for proposals
- Northern Plains Law Conference on Students with Disabilities
 - South Dakota, North Dakota and Montana
 - September 22-23, 2015 in Rapid City, SD
- State Systemic Improvement Plan
 - Discusses graduation rate for children with disabilities
 - Effective selection/effective support
 - Stakeholder Support—Surveys
- AT Guideline will come out in the Fall (September Conference)

DD:

- Waiver slots open
- Teresa Larsen requested data on ages of those on the Autism Spectrum who are utilizing the DD traditional waiver
- Amanda Carlsen was 99.9% sure there is a loophole that the State itself set up to allow for someone without an intellectual disability to be accepted on the DD traditional waiver.

Autism:

- Successfully wrapped up mini grant which funds were available due to having such a successful conference.
- Task Force would like a compilation of event reports to see where training efforts effective.
- Task Force would like to know numbers of how many attendees per training event.
- Ross Greene training was moved to current biennium as timing for schools worked best starting this Fall as opposed to last Spring.
- State Autism Conference in Fargo (October 21-23, 2015)
 - Currently seeking Sponsorships
 - 50 parent stipends were included in Conference planning. The question of whether or not childcare could be included was asked.
 - Book vendor will be at conference. Will find out whether keynote speaker John Elder Robison's new book would be available to sell.
 - Treehouse, which sells sensory products, was suggested as a possible vendor and the question of having a sensory room was suggested as well.
 - Due to rapid growth in interest, a call for presenters for the 2016 conference will begin.
- Waiver Program:
 - Infrastructure Development—how do we work within our state to develop an infrastructure across the state to reach out to more providers as there are more providers in the Eastern half as opposed to the Western half of the state.
 - Telebehavioral health may be the key to being able to provide services across the state especially for rural areas. Problem with this approach is how do providers bill for this and what is the quality of the diagnosis. For providers it will come down to margin and formulating a business plan to see if it is cost effective. Trisha Page will stay on top of the research.
 - The new Autism database will provide information as to number of autism diagnosis per region.
- Voucher Program
 - The Task Force would like clarification as to what makes someone eligible under the residency criteria.
 - Clarified the difference between the voucher system which has no fiscal agent and the waiver program which has a fiscal agent for AT purchases.
 - Spoke of exceptions for the spending cap of \$12,500 for those whose need may exceed the cap due to special needs (i.e. respite care to prevent out of home placement). This would have to go through the legislative process for discussion and approval.
- State Plan
 - Still discussing how to address autism services through the State Plan.
 - Notes have been given to Maggie Anderson as to what CMS wants included.
- Behavioral Health
 - Mark Doerner advised they are working on 1915i waiver HCBS system of care and trauma care.

- It is relevant that Behavioral Health is involved in the Task Force meetings as the task force will have access to the primary prevention of mental health and substance abuse umbrella.
- NDASDC Awards
 - Senator Joan Heckaman awarded for her support of Autism in North Dakota
 - Trisha Page—Visionary Leader Award
- Family Voices of North Dakota received an Autism Speaks Grant to provide an autism specific toolkit.
- Cathy Haarstad advised there is a Parent Involvement conference March 3-5, 2016 at the Ramada in Fargo.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Next Meetings

- September 14, 2015
- November 9, 2015
- March 21, 2016