

Autism Task Force Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2016

Polycom connected at 10:00 a.m.

Task Force Members Present: Trisha Page, Vicki Peterson, Gerry Teevens, Kim Hruby, Tom Carver, Teresa Larsen

Task Force Members Present via Polycom: Joan Heckaman, Connie Lillejord, Carol Johnson, Cathy Haarstad, John Porter, Nancy Ulrich-Crotty, Darren Dobrinski, Tom Gaffany

Guests (Present & via Polycom): Karen Tescher, Paula Hinton, Kirsten Dvorak, Jennifer Flores, Lorena Poppe, Jenn Restameyer, Nicole Watkins, Susan Gerenz, Kodi Pinks, Heather Steffl, Joan Karpenko, Barb Stanton

Minutes from November 2015 meeting were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Vicki Peterson and seconded by Teresa Larsen. Teresa believes that she was at the November 2015 meeting and would like her name added to the minutes. There were no other requests for changes.

The Taskforce discussed universally using the terms “clinical diagnosis” (clinic setting) and “educational determination” (school setting) when identifying where the autism diagnosis/determination came from. There was a vote to start utilizing these terms exclusively, and all task force members present voted (14/0) for the use of these terms, and there were none opposed.

Collective Impact:

- Discussion occurred concerning the Collective Impact Quality Indicators and priorities of what the next step should be in Phase 3 to continue moving forward.
- Under “What data is missing?”, the following questions were raised:
 - what percentage of clients with autism are reported to Protection and Advocacy (P&A);
 - “Misdiagnosis” was noted.
 - There is an overlap of autism diagnosis with bi-polar disorder, and
 - military families have trouble with diagnosis due to moving around.
 - Under “Genetic Issues,” are there markers which would be helpful to watch for in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)?
- Under “What would a comprehensive approach to collecting data look like?”, it was discussed that it would be helpful during the developmental stage to have the capability for comprehensive data sharing between agencies.

Department of Health:

- Electronic form is available for the ASD database

Insurance Update:

Lisa Carlson, Executive Director of Planning & Regulations for Sanford Health Plan

- Discussed that South Dakota has a mandate in which the state has to fund mandate for essential care benefits
 - Not responsible to comply if coverage is not grandfathered in.
 - Requires coverage of applied behavioral analysis (ABA), which has an annual limit of how many visits are covered
- Coverage in North Dakota includes habilitative and rehabilitative care, including:
 - Mental health counseling
 - Physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy
 - NOT covered: applied behavioral analysis (ABA)
 - EPSDT coverage is based on medical necessity and not “limits” set by insurance companies

Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Update:

- Safe Kids Project-Grant for equipment needs
- Upcoming Transition Conference
- Special Education Systemic Improvement Plan
 - Improving graduation output
 - Workforce Innovations Opportunity Act (WIOA)
 - Grant for technical assistance
- More collaboration happening
- Many phone calls from people seeking guidance and support. Sought input on best practices/techniques of bringing people together such as training sessions and finding the best time for people to be able to attend.

Developmental Disabilities (DD) Division Update:

- No waiting list for slots on the DD traditional waiver
- An amendment was submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for maintaining slots for years 1 and 2 of the waiver
- There were 629 individuals with ASD on the DD traditional waiver between 10/1/14 and 10/31/15. A breakdown by age was given as requested in the 9/14/15 meeting:
 - 2 (ages 0-2)
 - 173 (ages 3-11)
 - 154 (ages 12-18)
 - 67 (ages 19-21)
 - 233 (ages 22-82 (82 is age of the oldest individual receiving waiver services))

Autism Services Unit Update:

- Waiver Program:
 - Working on CMS and State Plan changes to amend the waiver for number of waiver slots and the increase in qualifying age
 - Discussed the definition of “medically necessary” for the State Plan amendment and who makes that determination
 - Waiver changes given to DHS Executive Director Maggie Anderson for review
 - Waiver numbers:
 - 42 currently being served
 - 3 found not eligible upon redetermination; one was overturned on appeal
 - 2 have aged out of services under the current terms of the waiver
 - 40 open slot letters were sent; received 7 packets back and sent to providers to schedule evaluations
 - 103 applications received for waiver services since July 1, 2014
- Voucher Program
 - Voucher numbers:
 - 50 applications received for current fiscal period
 - 43 received last fiscal year
 - 21 repeat applications
 - 33 approved; 31 being served (2 left due to out-of-home placement)
 - 14 awaiting income verification
 - 1 became eligible December 2015
 - Training
 - Ross Greene/Lives in the Balance updates given
 - ASD Conference dates: October 26-28, 2016, in Minot, ND

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Division Update:

Discussion on WIOA action steps and what that will look like for families/providers/schools

- VR still working on the details
- Schools-work through IEP teams
- Parents-talk to VR office/VR counselor
- Therapists-Regional VR office

Member Updates:

- People are starting to collaborate; walls are coming down
- More training is needed for first responders, parents, teachers, general public

Public Comments:

- Behavioral Health Issues

- There is a desire to look at the overlap of ASD and behavioral health going forward.
- Partnership Program
 - Is this program being accessed, funded, and supported as it should?
 - Why does only region 5 have respite? What about the other human service regions?
- How to connect families and their providers
 - Families feel they are not being heard.
 - Families do not feel their concerns are being understood.
 - Defining services needed
 - Should students be involved in the IEP process?
 - Building of natural supports-forming a community within the school

Project Lifesaver Update:

- Up and running in Bismarck
- Nicole Watkins/FVND has raised \$2,000 to date on a GoFundMe page dedicated to raising money to bring Project Lifesaver training to the Fargo area
- Check into adaptive swimming lessons

Meeting adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

Next Meetings:

- June 6, 2016
- September 12, 2016
- November 7, 2016