

## Autism Task Force Meeting

May 4, 2015

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Task Force Members Present: Trisha Page, Karen Tescher, Carolyn Fogarty, Tom Gaffaney, Cathy Haarstad, Kim Hruby, Teresa Larsen, Gerry Teevens, Connie Lillejord, Dr. Tom Carver

Others Present: Susan Gerenz, Peggy Shireley, Kodi Pinks, NaTasha Sawicki, Jennifer Flores, Amanda Carlsen, Lorena Poppe, Lynn Dodge, Kirsten Dvorak, Jennifer Restemayer, Paula Hinton

Minutes from December 2014 reviewed and motion to approve by Kathy Haarstad.

Trisha reviewed the Collective Impact Study that will be reported to the national agency.

First area is common agenda: Discussion by the group. Suggested that the task force is in the moderate phase but do not necessarily agree that the legislators are in that same category. We will approach it as it is the thoughts of the task force with input from the stakeholders. Cathy wondered if the governor's office is being well informed of the task force activities. Thinking there should be more regular meetings with the governor's office.

**1. Common Agenda: Majority vote was moderate impact in this area.**

**Shared Measurements: Maintains accountability related to goals, strategies, and measurements of success: Discussion was for future we are going to need to have a comprehensive view of where each individual is at for quality and outcomes. Suggestion we would need to consult with someone to assure we are looking at collaborating across systems to get data.**

**2. Shared Measurements; Group determined we are MILD in this area.**

**Mutually Reinforcing Activities: Build continuity of goals, funding data, resources across systems.**

**3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities: Mild to Moderate on this one.**

**Continuous Communication: Communication is key and task force member thinks we still have improvements to make in this area. We do have a website and that has helped. Theresa appreciates the calls to providers, but we don't have objectives in communication. Some think we have made great strides in communication. Having the Autism Coordinator and now a 2<sup>nd</sup> FTE will hopefully allow more time to improve communication. It is good that stakeholders have been invited to attend the task force meetings. Families are absolutely the center of this and we have to have a collaborative effort.**

**4. Continuous Communication: MODERATE**

**Backbone support: Key stakeholder involvement. Agency serves as a backbone for the effort.**

## 5. Backbone Support: MODERATE

Trisha would like to revisit this document at least once a year to see how we are doing.

### Legislative updates:

**Department of Health:** 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.

SB 2012 (DHS budget) –Medicaid guidelines act as guidance for service payment within CSHS. Also, what Medicaid does with their provider inflationary increases impacts how CSHS pays providers. There ended up being a 4% and 4% provider increase for the biennium. Family Voices of ND and Federation of Families funding was also introduced in this legislation, and each received \$75,000. CSHS also provides funding to Family Voices of ND.

SB 2334 (Newborn Screening) – This bill that addressed the state's newborn screening program underwent some minor language changes to reflect current and best practices.

**DPI updates:** bill of rights for children deaf or hard of hearing. Will need to work with schools on this. Change for teacher license to include mental health training.

Suicide prevention training: must provide 2 hours annually.

**DD:** Amanda said her tracking has nothing to do with this group.

Had asked for 3 more DDPMs to keep ratio to 60 to 1. They can hire temps or change administrative code or law.

### Autism:

Training funding remains the same

- autism continues to receive support from the legislature and the results from the session are:
  - Increase in waiver slots by 37 for a total of 84 slots. Should go into effect by December 1<sup>st</sup> if CMS approves the waiver amendment.
  - Increase in voucher funding for 10 new slots for a total of a minimum of 53 served. Go into effect July 1, 2015.
- Language in section 24 of SB 2012 where it states:

- **SECTION 24. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - AUTISM SERVICES.** During the 2015-16 interim, the legislative management shall consider studying services for children with autism. The study must include a review of services currently provided by the department of human services, the superintendent of public instruction, and other state and local agencies, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the continuum of care, transition between programs, and outcomes. The study must also identify current funding for these programs and projected funding needs in future bienniums by funding source. The legislative management shall report its findings and recommendations, along with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to the sixty-fifth legislative assembly. (Legislative management generally chooses their studies in May. So you will know soon if this area will continue to be involved in a study during the interim)
- **AND** that it is clear that during the next biennium the autism division will begin analyzing data collected by the varied programs and develop and design reporting mechanisms to help inform decisions and provide a picture of the service impact on the children.
- **FTE approval**

**Suggested Additions to Task Force:**

- Now will ask someone from Behavioral Health and VR services to be task force members. Will check the governor's office with how these changes would affect the rules of the task force membership. **We will have a motion for these additions. Also recommending having an advocate for an adult with autism. There is a participant today of someone who has autism.**