

**Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities
Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary – February 8th, 2016**

Present: Sue Hartung, Chair; David Cross; Susan Ingram; Seth Morgan; Reda Sheinberg; ; Rosemary DiPietro; Susan Smith; Claire Funkhouser; Eldora Taylor; Kim Mayo; Karen Morgret; Lyda Astrove; Penny Veerhoff, Margie Parrott, Shawn Lattanzio, John Whittle, Monica Herring, Karen Morgret, and Larry Bram

DDA Presenters: Patricia Sastoque, Terrah Tessier, Carol Bowman

Staff: Betsy Luecking

Susan Hartung convened the meeting and introductions were made.

Update on Maryland State Developmental Disability Administration (DDA) – Patricia Sastoque

Patricia informed the committee that Gail Singletary, DDA Southern Regional Office (SRO) has announced her retirement and her last day is February 9th. Patricia will be sending a letter to all providers in the Southern Region notifying them of this staff change and alerting them to which senior level managers they should contact:

Carol Bowman for eligibility of waiver services and Coordination of Community Services (CCS) transfers, and crisis resolution;

Michael Bryan for approval of service change requests, approval for cost neutrals, and appeals;

Mark Celeste will handle crisis issues, quality enhancement, site visits, and new provider orientation; and

Ernesta Duke will be the lead person working on self direction services for Montgomery County.

Terry Lowe will continue to handle physical management of the office.

Staff under Michael Bryan will handle supported employment and transitioning youth. All staff will be cross trained so that each understands and is able to perform each position. Gail's position will not be filled with a current employee in an acting role. Bernie Simons had to request a hiring freeze exemption in order to get approval to post a vacancy notice for Gail's position.

Two weeks ago Patricia and Gail met to discuss restructuring SRO's organizational chart. Patricia reported that all regional office staff organization will be restructured. When Janice Stallworth retired, DDA viewed it as an opportunity to review the department's organizational structure.

There is concern that regional offices are understaffed and are unable to manage the volume of work. Patricia addressed this concern and stated that the way SRO operated created a back log of service change requests. It has been her task since July to figure out how SRO can work efficiently and effectively. A statistical data analysis of the workload and processes was completed. After reviewing the data it was determined that additional 2.5 staff would alleviate issues as well as staff restructuring of the office. Patricia has been visiting SRO bi-weekly to assist with the back log and to address staff restructuring. A hiring freeze exemption has also been obtained to advertise for Janice Stallworth's open position as well as two additional staff positions.

It was discussed that Janice Stallworth used to keep a master list of Transitioning Youth (TY) within the County and would provide monthly updates to the Committee. It was asked if DDA will still be supplying those numbers. Patricia stated that this is an issue she is trying to solve by making sure staff are cross-trained and knowledge is not maintained by just one person. She noted that she has a list of TY that shows that there are people from 2014 that are not receiving any waiver services yet. She suggested holding meetings with each region regarding TY to discuss how to track cases and creating a Committee to work on this issue. Someone noted that they received two eligibility packets today for individuals that were both 21 years of age and had not received any DDA services to date. It was suggested that the person contact the transition support teachers at their respective schools.

Patricia noted that when an individual first gets into the waiver if they do not receive at least one service within thirty days they are removed from the waiver. There was an issue recently regarding a mailing that was sent out recently to thousands of families concerning the ceasing of individual support services (case management only) due to lack of funding. First, the original mailing did not include an appeals form. Second, the mailing had a lot of incorrect addresses that DDA has been working to sort out. The issue arose from CCS Coordinators not notifying regional offices with their clients had address updates. Letters will be mailed shortly to those with updated addresses. For those families who did receive the letter and have filed an appeal based on their eligibility status, those appeals are being sorted through to determine whether or not their appeal claim is valid. If their appeal is accepted it will be handled by the appeals

department and an attorney will contact those families. Families who have not received a letter yet will be given the full time frame to appeal. DDA Regional Offices are also notifying Coordinators that if they update information in the individual's IP that it needs to be shared with the regional office so the State system is up to date as well.

DDA will be conducting an all day training in June for CCS Coordinators that will be conducted by national experts to assist them in creating new ways of thinking to complete their jobs. The training will also include presentations on Community First Choice and REM Waivers to make them aware of other resources available for their clients.

Patricia noted that DDA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Maryland State Department of Education that they are to share information concerning Transitioning Youth in order to keep track of those individuals at the County level.

Margie Parrott gave an update on TY. For 2015, 102 people were placed out of 121. Of those not placed it could be due to medical assistance or citizenship issues or a provider could not be found. For 2016, there are 115 TY. 5 have received service plans to date. It was noted that the uninsured population is growing as well as some issues with those not meeting the five year residency requirement.

A discussion was had regarding the increase in self directed services.

Patricia reported that DDA is reviewing how other states handle eligibility for individuals. Bernie Simons would like to create a policy that would allow families to submit subsequent paperwork as the child ages to support their eligibility to meet the DDA definition. The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Coalition (MDDC) will be meeting next Friday to discuss this issue. MDDC will be looking at the developmental disability definition for both children and adults.

Patricia reported that the DDA is not responsible for maintaining the County's waiting list for CCS. They can let families know that the County has a 500 person limit, but they cannot tell them if there is a wait list. A policy will also be forthcoming from DDA that will be sent to providers stating that all transfer requests must come to the regional office and providers should not be discussing transfer information in order to maintain one point of contact. DDA will be attending professional ethic, conflict of interest and solicitation notices in their provider agreements.

Patricia is looking for family members and self advocates who are currently receiving self-directed services and who would like to participate in a Committee that is looking to restructure the program. Interested individuals can contact her directly. Olga.Sastoque@maryland.gov

Autism Waiver to DDA Transition - David Cross

David reported that changing from the Autism Waiver to DDA adult services is very complicated. In the Autism Waiver families are in touch with their Coordinators at least once a month and several times if the family is going through a crisis. Families have a set menu of services that they can select from.

Coordination of Community Resources – Kim Mayo

CCS currently has 465 individuals receiving services. There are 50 individuals for every Coordinator with 7 Coordinators currently completing the work. Kim noted that they are still hiring new Coordinators. She has spent many hours working with Carol Bowman to reconcile the number of transfer requests DDA has received and the number of clients that the County is currently serving.

Claire Funkhouser made a motion for the Committee to ask the Commission on People with Disabilities ask for the County to add an additional 100 slots for CCS when testify before the County Council in April. Larry Bram seconded the motion. The Commission will discuss at their next meeting, to be held February 10th.

Roundtable: Susan is now on the Quality Advisory Committee for Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council. Next month the company behind My Supports, which is a database of individuals who provide services for people who are self-directed, will give a presentation to the Committee.

Upcoming Meeting:

The next meeting will be held March 14th, 2016, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist, and Betsy Luecking, Community Outreach Manager