



**Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities
Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary – April 12th, 2021**

Larry Bram, Co-Chair • Karen Morgret, Co-Chair

Attendees: Betty Bahadori; Larry Bram; Carolyn Chen; Rosemary DiPietro; Kim Dunkin; Claire Funkhouser; Susan Hartung; Susan Ingram; Annette Jolles; Lisa Lorraine; Jenn Lynn; Laurie Lyons; Linda McMillan; Karen Morgret; Gloria Odongo; Laurie Reyes; Reda Sheinberg; Beth Shuman; Susan Smith; Jeneva Stone
Staff: Betsy Luecking; Carly Clem

Approval of the March 2021 Meeting Summary Minutes

A motion was made to approve the March 2021 Meeting Summary Minutes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the March 2021 Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved as written. Approved minutes are available online at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd - click on the tab Developmental Disability Advisory Committee.

Autism Initiatives – Officer Laurie Reyes, Montgomery County Department of Police (MCPD), Special Operations Division, Autism/IDD, Alzheimer’s/Dementia Outreach Unit

Website: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/AIDD

The Autism/IDD, Alzheimer’s and Dementia Outreach program began in 2005, partly in response to the growing number of police calls involving missing residents who had autism/IDD, Alzheimer’s, and dementia.

- The program has continued to develop and today provides a “total approach” to issues that these residents and police encounter through education, outreach, follow-up, empowerment, and response.
- The program has been educating and training officers since 2010.
 - All MCPD recruits and officers receive training and education on ways to ensure positive, effective, and safe interactions between law enforcement and the Autism/IDD communities.
- The unit also works with caregivers and those who have Autism/IDD on ways to ensure that they are safe in the community.
- The unit regularly utilizes “self-advocates”, those who have autism or other intellectual and developmental disabilities, to assist with their presentations.
- The program follows-up with caregivers after we receive notice of a call for service involving someone from the autism/IDD, Alzheimer’s, or dementia community.
 - There is an average of 30 to 40 follow ups per month.
- The program has partnered with Pathfinders with Autism for several years now.
 - Together they are hosting their first Autism and I/DD driver safety and traffic stop familiarization class tonight via Zoom.
 - Class will discuss what it is like to get pulled over, what they should do to stay self, and self-disclosure to the officer.
 - The class will hold a follow-up in-person demonstration of mock traffic stops.
 - All participants for the in-person demonstration must be licensed driver’s or have a learner’s permit.
 - Officer Reyes has presented to the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) about Autism and I/DD driving awareness as well as educating officers on drivers who have Autism, I/DD and other disabilities.
- Over the last five to ten years law enforcement has seen an increase in calls of a more serious nature involving the Autism community and individuals with mental health concerns. The increase is due to individuals with Autism going through early teens and entering into adulthood. The program is addressing this by training officers and partnering with the MCPD Crisis Intervention Team (CIT).

- The program also continues to partner with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).
 - Have a relationship to identify students on the spectrum and critically at-risk persons.
- The program has identified 80 to 90 persons in the past few months.
 - Identification occurs before caregivers are notifying MCPD.
 - May occur for different reasons – family members do not want to call 911 or they are burned out.
 - Continue to address these issues and train officers.
 - Continue to hand out safety kits - provided to caregivers and contains wandering prevention tools to include window clings for the door and home and a MCPD safety t-shirt.
 - Provide home visits and campaign for family members to call 911 when their loved one is missing.

The floor was opened to questions.

Does MCPD collaborate with other police departments outside of the County?

- Officer Reyes has presented to all the Police Chiefs in the Washington, DC area.
- She has offered to assist other jurisdictions.
- The state of Maryland has mandated that all officers receive training
- Officer Reyes will be presenting before the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children on how police departments can start their own program.

Will virtual resources and responses be available once County services are offered in-person again?

- Most resources will still be offered virtually.
- Some individuals prefer virtual services while others will only meet with Officer Reyes in-person.
 - Safety measures are taken if meetings are held in-person.

Beds for individuals have crisis have decreased. Does Officer Reyes see that changing?

- There is not a bed shortage – the beds were never available.
- Frustrating that families may need to call 911 for someone who is in crisis but that individual cannot be hospitalized due to lack of beds.

Further discussion on families not reporting their loved ones having gone missing.

- Not a COVID specific phenomenon.
- Rarely searching for individuals – they are located before the family realizes the person is missing.
- Average between 5 to 8 finds per week.
- Sometimes the individual is within the officer's care for an hour or two.
- Petitioned and spoken in front of the IACC and other organizations about this issue.
- Stress to families that they call 911 as soon as they realize their loved one is missing.
- Advise that individuals wearing an identification bracelet if they feel comfortable wearing one (make it part of their safety plan at school).
- Advise the individuals to self-disclose and show their identification bracelet to first responders.
- Most finds are individuals who have Autism; found before caregivers realize they are missing.
- Numbers will continue to increase as the prevalency of Autism increases.

Concern that an individual wearing an identification bracelet could be targeted.

- The likelihood that the individual will come across a good guy outweighs the alternative.
- The bad guys already know.
- T-shirts designed for those who cannot speak – indicate that the individual who has Autism or I/DD and for the individual to call 911.
- Officer Reyes understand the controversy of wearing the shirt but it has been helpful in certain situations.
- Other options include writing the individuals's information in sharpie on the back of their clothing.
- Identification is not mandatory but should be included as part of their social story.

Is there microchipping technology that could be used?

- Microchips do not track but only provide an address.
- Tracking devices can be challenging due to battery life, durability and size.

Current community debate regarding police involvement when a person is having a behavioral, emotional or mental health crisis.

- How can these individuals identify themselves visually to police?
- How can those working with these individuals identify themselves (providers, support staff or self-directed staff)
- Officer Reyes makes over 200 presentations a year to caregivers, individuals and the community.
- Encourage caregivers to be an advocate and a voice for their loved one.
- Individuals are encouraged to have a mental mindset and a script to be used during a crisis.
- 911 Script: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pol/Resources/Files/autism/Wandering911Script.pdf>
- Provide classes and tools to individuals on how to react during a crisis.
- Broad social outreach campaign to the community.

Important to keep in mind that support staff do not always look like the person they are supporting.

- Officers are taught that about non-familial caregivers and that they may be of different ethnicities so they understand what the situation may look like when encountered.
- Challenge to have a caregiver wear something that is identifiable to officers.
- Officer Reyes is interested in any suggestions on how to handle these situations.

Is the program funded well?

- Fortunate to have the support from the County Executive and MCPD.
- Program is managed by Officer Reyes and part-time Officer Tara Bond.
- Due to the demands another staff person is needed.
- Increase in Autism and I/DD identification presents the possibility of more challenges for law enforcement.
- Committee could advocate for more funding.

Update from Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) – Onesta Duke, Regional Director, Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), Maryland Department of Health (MDH), Southern Maryland Regional Office (SMRO)

- 861 people on the waiting list in Montgomery County
 - 14 in crisis resolution
 - 35 in crisis prevention
 - 812 in current request

TY 20 - 168 Total

- 82 placed
- 86 Not placed
 - 8 Declined
 - 1 waiver denied due to citizenship
 - 10 waivers pending
 - 38 waivers approved need providers
 - 28 CCS still working to complete waiver paperwork and locate providers

SMRO has been collaborating with Maryland Department of Public Health and Maryland Department of Disabilities to coordinate vaccination clinics.

- Several clinics have been held in Prince George's County – open to individuals throughout SMRO.
- New Horizons hosted a clinic on April 6 and April 7.
- Currently collaborating with Opportunities, Inc. to host a clinic in Montgomery County
 - Tentatively to be held April 26 and April 27.
 - Clinics will provide vaccines to those outside of the agency, persons with developmental and intellectual disabilities, caregivers, CCSs, those in self-directed services delivery model and individuals on the waiting list.
- Reaching out to providers to let them know about the clinics.

- DDA has been disseminating weekly surveys to providers to collect data on the number of program participants and staff that have been vaccinated.
 - That data was shared during Deputy Secretary Simon's last Friday.
 - Updated data will be shared this upcoming Friday.
 - Do not have any specific vaccination data for Montgomery County.
 - Onesta can share at next month's meeting.
- DDA will be resuming meetings to discuss reopening with those agencies that expressed an interest.

The floor was opened to questions.

What is the criteria for children under 18 going into the Family Support (FS) waiver?

- If an individual is under 18 and in crisis resolution they would fall into the FS waiver.
- There is some flexibility if the individual is categorized in crisis prevention.

In terms of reopening criteria, what is DDA responsible for and what are the individual agencies responsible for?

- Several months ago, DDA shared a reopening framework with their provider network regarding what should be taken into account when the provider decides to reopen.
 - These are not mandates – just recommendations for the provider to consider.
 - All considerations are rooted in the individual's health and safety and considerations around transportation, PPE, disinfecting due to outbreaks.
 - Reopening Meaningful Day Services Framework: <https://files.constantcontact.com/f401fd14401/5809387a-7b8a-480f-bde4-58b44a8ff77e.pdf>
 - A number of providers have utilized these recommendations to launch soft reopenings.
 - Some providers offer a hybrid schedule with site-based programs three days a week with virtual supports provided the other two days.
 - Some providers are sharing their reopening plans – available on those provider's websites.
 - Maryland Health Department and local jurisdictions also have their own rules.
 - Complex as some individuals have been vaccinated while others have not been.

COVID-19 Vaccination Update/Changes – Beth Shuman, LCSW-C, Senior Legislative Aide, Office of Council Vice President Gabe Alborno, Montgomery County Council

Dr. Michael Greenberg has determined many individuals from the developmental disability community have registered for the vaccine, but there are still issues with DSPs registering.

- Difficult to determine if there are transportation issues.
- Potentially will hold a clinic to accommodate those who cannot wear a mask or wait in line.
 - DSPs would also be able to receive a vaccine.
- Discussing a County-wide campaign to pre-register everyone and ask if accommodations are needed.
- Do not have a good sense right now who needs to be vaccinated.
- Need to capture the whole developmental disability community – all ages, all circumstances, all caregivers.
 - Accommodations, resources and clinics were be set up based on those needs.
- Arc Montgomery County will be hosting a clinic on April 30
 - Provider agencies are being contacted specifically to get a number of count of people who will need the vaccination.
 - Another clinic is targeting all people in Montgomery County who have any kind of disability
- Jenn Lynn has friends whose kids and adults who still live at home are having trouble accessing the vaccine.
 - Looking for drive-thru clinics.
- Everyone is eligible to receive a vaccine throughout the state of Maryland.

Legislation Updates – Roundtable

Developmental disability supplement paid by the County has been a match to state funding for over 30 years to enable providers to expand services and provide a higher quality of services.

- Now close to 40 providers in the County eligible for the supplement.
- This year five new providers want to receive the supplement.

- The County’s developmental disability supplement has an average range of 7% to 11% in relationship to the state funding.
- Revenue for developmental disability provider over the last eight years has grown 6.8%.
- Under the upcoming fiscal year, the combined revenue received from DDA will be approximately \$191 million.
- Inter ACC/DD submitted a 10% supplement request - \$10.1 million.
- Proposed FY22 Operating Budget is a decrease from last year’s amount.
- Additional 1.5% did not get applied to the full supplement from the prior fiscal year.
- It did not analyze or include last year’s special appropriation that the County put in over the summer.
- County Council has been asked to include an additional \$1.3 million over what the County Executive has included in his budget.
- Commission on People with Disabilities testified in support of Inter ACC/DD’s request.
- Some provider agencies are asking for letters of support from families they serve.
- One or two providers did close due financial strains during the pandemic.
- Most providers were able to maintain services due to the flexibility detailed in Appendix K.
- Most providers created virtual platforms to provide services.
- Several actions starting that Federal level helped agencies such as those who are eligible for PPP loans or offsetting some losses through Medicaid.
- Maryland recently passed legislation to increase the state share of the federal match for home and community-based services to 60% - an increase of 10%.
 - Funding will be used by DDA to give providers a retroactive one-time payment.

Coordination of Community Services (CCS) Updates

Service Coordination Inc. (SCI)

Laurie Lyons, Program Manager, reported

- Serve total of 430 people in Montgomery County
- 142 are CC (in services) – includes 39 people in Self-direction
- 9 Comprehensive Assessment
- 11 Crisis Prevention
- 10 Crisis Resolution
- 258 Current Request – includes 52 TY
- Working with clients to get their self-directed plans updated and resubmitted.
 - More individuals are transitioning to self-directed this year.
- Continue to expand in Montgomery County and looking to hire an additional supervisor and at least three more CCS positions
 - Started to offer sign on bonuses as an incentive.
- SCI continues to receive a steady stream of referrals or people transferring from other agencies.

Total Care

Gloria Odongo, Director of Quality Enhancement, reported

Montgomery County Roster

- Total Care Services currently serves **813** people in Montgomery county
- In services – **664** people
- Waiting List: **149** people (of the 149, **[7]** are crisis prevention and **[3]** are in crisis resolution)
- Self-Direct – **37** people.
- Comprehensive Assessments – **(6)**
- Since the last meeting we have had **(3)** people transfer in and **(1)** person transfer out.

Transitioning Youth

TY20 – Total of 19 students

- (12) Students have been approved for the CPW waiver.
- (2) Students – need to complete waiver applications
- (1) student – Waiver is currently pending initial PCP approval.

- (1) student – Coordinator is working with the provider to re-do the intake process, as the provider reported that previous staff who initially completed the intake is no longer there
- (3) students- Need revised PCPs.

TY21 – Total of 17 students

- Of the (17) students (5) matrix scores have been submitted.
- (2) Students are in the CPW
- (4) students are in the FSW. The Coordinators will have to complete a revised PCP to update services and change the waiver type.
- CCS are scheduling PCPs after receiving clarification of matrix's, DSAT and Cost Detail Tool.

Community First Choice

- Total Care Services, Inc is now an approved provider for Community First Choice in the state of Maryland.

New Hires

- We have hired (2) additional Coordinators since the last DDAC meeting and we have (4) Coordinators starting on 04.19.2021

Supervision structure

- We now have a Transition Supervisor in place who works with the new hires for a period of (90) days as they learn their role after which they are transferred to a permanent supervisor.

MMARS

Kim Dunkin, reported

- 1,456 Active Cases
- 1,142 In Service
- 81 Self Directing
- 314 Waiting List
 - 296 Current Request
 - 12 Crisis Prevention
 - 6 Crisis Resolution
 - 1 upgrade since last meeting
- 102 TYs being worked on in Montgomery County
 - 47 TY'20s
 - 55 TY'21s
- MMARS is still actively working to ensure consistency for their individuals and their families as they navigate CCS turn over.
- 5 new CCS starting next Monday and upper management has been working to better understand why CCSs are leaving and providing incentives to CCSs to maintain employment with MMARS.
- There has been a lot of changes with DDA recently, but they are actively working to ensure compliance is sought with each new implementation.

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services/Community Support Network (CSN)

Rosemary DiPietro, Program Manager, reported

- CSN serve about 55 individuals in self-directed services.
- At the directive of DDA, CCSs are working to revise person-centered plans by the end of June.
- Individuals who received personal supports and supportive listing through Appendix K must have it entered in the LTSS system.
- CCSs are working hard to meet the demands from DDA.
- County Executive has recommended two CSN contractor positions be converted to merit positions.
- Still need a second Program Manager but it was not included in budget.
- In a good position to have TYs ready to receive services July 1st.
- Working with DDA on one TY who is having technical difficulties with their person-centered plan.
- Higher percentage of TYs are interested in self-directed services.

Reda noted that there are not many support brokers available to provide assistance with self-directed services.

- Onesta reported support broker certification and recertification training is occurring and those days are listed on DDA's calendar.

Announcements

Respectfully Submitted,

Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist

Betsy Luecking, Community Outreach Manager

Next Meeting

Monday, May 10th, 2021 from 4pm to 5:30pm – via Zoom

Instructions to attend will be included on the meeting agenda.