



**Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities
Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary – February 13, 2023**

Eric Salzano & Karen Morgret, Co-Chairs

Attendees

Commission Members: Karen Morgret; Eric Salzano; Michael Greenberg; Susan Smith; John Whittle; Avner Shapiro; Tonya Gilchrist; Najla Wortham; Jeneva Stone

Former Commission Members: Seth Morgan

County Executive Staff: Ken Hartman-Espada

HHS Staff: Odile Brunetto; Kim Mayo; Shawn Lattanzio

DDA: Onesta Duke

MCPS Staff: Margie Parrott

DDA Providers: Susan Ingram; Jenn Lynn; Lisa Lorraine

CCS Staff: Laurie Lyons (Service Coordination, Inc.); Susan Hartung (MMARS); Julia Jensen (Total Care); Rosemary DiPietro (Community Support Network/HHS)

Parents: Betty Bahadori; Reda Sheinberg; Anette Jolles; Scottie Holton; Mary Keyser

Commission Staff: Betsy Luecking; Carly Clem

Approval of the January 2023 Meeting Summary Minutes

A motion was made to approve the January 2023 Meeting Summary Minutes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the January 2023 Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved with the correction. Approved minutes are available online at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ddac.

Follow Up Discussion on the Creation of a new Montgomery County Commission/Committee on Intellectual and Development Disabilities and Timetable

Karen read through the draft legislation that will be introduced by Councilmember Gabe Albornoz on February 14.

[Bill 10-23, Health - Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission - Established](#)

Legislation would establish an Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission and generally amend the law regarding the provision and coordination of services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the County. A public hearing will be held on March 7 at 1:30 p.m. HHS Committee worksession scheduled for March 9 at 9:30am.

Feedback from attendees:

- Commission should include representation for mental health. Some individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) also have mental health needs. Huge gap in mental health services currently overall. Harder for those with I/DD to receive mental health services. More youth with Autism and I/DD are staying overnight in hospitals. DDA and Maryland Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) are working together to increase hospital beds and psychiatrists as there is a severe shortage.
 - Legislation currently requires a non-voting representative from DHHS – could be filled by Shawn Lattanzio, Local Behavioral Health Authority, DHHS.
 - Najla Wortham, Rock Creek Foundation, noted that in July 2022, Optum excluded individuals that are eligible for DDA services or in receipt of DDA services from receiving psychiatric rehabilitation services (including medication, coping skills, compliance) – even though the individual has a qualifying mental health diagnosis and services would be paid by Medicaid.

- Commission should include representation from MCPS, specifically Special Education and the Autism Waiver.
 - Legislation does include a requirement that a representative from MCPS be appointed as a non-voting member.
- Commission may have designated seats and appointed members but as the meetings are open to the public anyone can attend.

DDA Policies for Stakeholder Input

Website: <https://health.maryland.gov/dda/Pages/DDA-Policy-Stakeholder-Input.aspx>

Policies directly impact people receiving services. Stakeholders have two weeks to provide input once a draft policy is posted. DDA has issued two draft policies for stakeholder input by February 13 at 11:59pm. Members can review the attached policies and submit in their input as individuals.

Draft Policy: [Assistive Technology and Services](#)

- Feedback from Community Support Services (CSS): include ongoing training to include tablet or communication device; include software used by devices; include replacement of technology due to being broken or new/better technology; broaden range of who can complete an assessment to include speech or language therapists.

Draft Policy: [Environmental Assessments and Modifications](#)

- Feedback from Community Support Services (CSS): include that the items listed is not exhaustive and provide more examples of items one might need; allow bathroom drains for those needing assistance with the bathroom or shower to avoid potential costly water damage; increase amount needed for an assessment from \$2,000 to \$5,000; broaden range of who can complete an assessment to include a psychologist or a physical therapist.
- Recommended that individuals submit feedback with examples of items they have used or have been found to be useful.

Recommendation that moving forward, feedback received by DDA should share commonality as input may be received more favorably and more likely to be included.

Transitioning Youth Update – Onesta Duke, Regional Director Southern Maryland Regional Office (SMRO), DDA and Margie Parrott M.Ed., Acting Supervisor, Transition Services Unit, Department of Special Education Services, Office of Special Education, Montgomery County Public Schools

- 2023 – 151 TYs
- 2024 – 153 TYs
- 2025 – 162 TYs (projection)
- 2026 – 154 TYs (projection)
- 2027 – 168 TYs (projection)
- 2028 – 167 TYs (projection)

TY data includes non-public schools. According to Transition Support Teachers (TST), majority of students who graduated last year are either in self-directed services or have been picked up by agency, although many have not started services due to lack of staff. Some agencies are putting students on waiting lists. Families contact TSTs for any kind of assistance they can get. Many agencies are working on getting waiver meetings and PCPs completed for 2023 graduates. Susan Ingram said she will discuss the issue of the waiting lists with InterACC/DD. Margie has been working with InterACC/DD and CCS agencies to discuss how to work better to fix these gaps.

Major issue is lack of labor in the market. MCPS has had a difficult time maintaining employment of sign language interpreters and have had to contract out for speech pathologists. Nationwide shortage of speech language pathologists. New Commission may be able to address this issue. Adult providers typically do not offer speech pathology services. Karen reported Treatment and Learning Centers (TLC) has a speech and language pathologist on staff for children and adults. Eric reported Community

Services for Autistic Adults & Children, has a dental hygienist on staff to provide intense training, house visits, and recommends dentists based on individual behaviors.

In December 2022/January 2023, InterACC/DD worked with three CCS agencies and 20 providers to try and identify placements.

Individuals are choosing self-directed services for multiple reasons including they cannot find a provider or they have more intensive medical or behavioral needs. Eric explained the importance of gathering documents needed for the application process as early as possible.

Onesta reported TY data for Montgomery County.

TY20/FY 21 – 163 TYs total

- 128 placed
- 18 declined services
- 2 denied waiver enrollment
- 15 not placed
 - 1 waiver enrollment pending
 - 13 approved waivers
 - 1 going through TY process
 - 6 PCPs in progress – CCS has identified placement
 - Reduces not placed from 15 to 9

TY21/FY22 – 190 TYs total

- 148 placed
- 16 declined services
- 5 denied waiver enrollment
- 5 families were non-responsive
- 16 not placed
 - 5 waivers pending
 - 2 providers identified
 - 9 waivers approved and CCS looking to identify providers

TY22/FY23 – 174 TYs total

- 105 placed
- 8 declined services
- 8 denied waiver enrollment
- 53 not placed
 - 14 waivers pending
 - 3 identified providers
 - 24 waivers approved
 - 15 working to complete the process
- Anticipate CCS agencies will identify placements as soon as possible.

Nicole Sheppard, TY Lead, SMRO, is meeting individually with each CCS agency on a monthly basis to track progress of TYs as it pertains to waiver enrollment, identifying placement and a number of other tasks. Provider services team continues to identify providers that are interested in working with TY population and lists are shared with CCS agencies in order to facilitate placement. DDA is engaging in a more efficient data collection process and data provided today is a more accurate reflection than data given back in November. DDA's definition of placement is if the PCP contains an identified provider with an effective start date and the plan has been approved. DDA continues to track providers that have had families on waiting lists. Onesta will check data to confirm that services have actually started. She will also double check on the extension end date. If an individual misses the DDA enrollment timeframe, the individual can complete an exception form that is reviewed by headquarters and authorized for a waiver spot if approved. Forms are typically approved. Individuals who are on the waiver with an approved PCP

but are not with a service provider will maintain waiver enrollment as long as the individual is demonstrating an effort to identify placement. Labor shortage of direct support professionals (DSP) continues to be a problem.

CCS agencies prioritize obtaining residential placement for those individuals who need it. Most individuals only need meaningful day and employment.

Waiting list data for Montgomery County – 648 individuals total

- 0 – crisis resolution
- 47 – crisis prevention
- 601 – current request
 - Individual's can be assessed for an upgrade if needed
- Request for Onesta to provide age of individuals and how long they've been on the waiting list.

Announcements

Eric reported through the [Inflation Reduction Act of 2022](#) allows for non-profits to receive a direct payment for 30% of their total solar energy system installation costs.

Lisa reported Breaking Barriers (Jubilee Association of Maryland) is hosting a DSP job fair on February 23 in conjunction with WorkSource Montgomery. The DSP Job Fair will provide opportunities to learn about this field and apply to jobs with ten organizations. Lisa reported that underserved populations are underserved due to several reasons including cultural factors, communication due to language barriers and interpreters not understanding the system. Lisa has received feedback from many hispanic families that they have concerns about having someone working one-on-one with their child as they are non-verbal or have a hard time communicating. It would be helpful if the Spanish speaking community was more represented in the workforce.

Next meeting is scheduled on March 13 from 4pm to 5:30pm. Zoom link to be announced.

Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted By

Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist; Betsy Luecking, Community Outreach Manager