



**Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities  
Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee  
Meeting Summary – February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

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

**Attendees:** Betty Bahadori; Larry Bram; Odile Brunetto; L. Michael Bryan; Carly Clem; Christine Dagostino; Rosemary DiPietro; Claire Funkhouser; Susan Goodman; Susan Hartung; Sari Hornstein; Kim Khan; Betsy Luecking; Jenn Lynn; Laurie Lyons; Linda McMillan; Kim Mayo; Karen Morgret; Sara O’Neil; Gloria Odongo; Jessica Port; Beth Shuman; Susan Smith; Jeneva Stone

**Approval of the January 2021 Meeting Summary Minutes**

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

**Mission: Mental Wellness During the Pandemic – Jessica Port, Operations Manager, Crisis Prevention and Intervention Services, Every-Mind**

- Offer programs for people who are homebound, elderly and feeling isolated
- Operate in 11 different Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) via Linkages to Learning
  - Community school coordinators
  - Some schools are on waiting lists for a number of years to get the program
  - Program assists students and their families by providing or connecting them to services and resources that address the social, economic, health, and emotional issues that may interfere with student success.
  - A team consisting of a community school coordinator, a family case manager, and a child and family therapist who work together along with the school body to identify kids and families that might be struggling with poverty and mental health concerns
  - Aim is for short-term 30 to 90 day supports to get families back on their feet
    - Some families require longer supports
    - Some families need one-time support
  - Offer Facebook streaming webinars and informative panels to reach students and families who do not have the program at their school
  - Susan Hartung, Parent, works in a high school and is seeing significant increases in depression in students
- Supportive listening through National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
  - Operate Montgomery County hotline through County contract
  - Hotline answered by staff and volunteers
  - Callers are referred to organizations in their area based on their needs
  - Veteran callers are transferred to the Veteran program
  - Since the start of the pandemic there has been over a 100% increase in the amount of calls received by the hotline in the past ten months
  - Staffing has increased and they are consistently training new volunteers
- COVID-19 has brought on new challenges due to the shortage of home caregivers
  - Parents/family/individuals are filling in those gaps – add extra stress to an already stressful situation
- Spanish- and French-speaking clinicians

- All case managers in public schools and most child and family therapists are bilingual in Spanish
- Funded through a variety of contracts as well as donors
  - Non-profit 503c
  - Veterans program funded through Veteran-centric organizations
  - County contracts – partnership with MCPS and local hospitals

**COVID-19 Vaccination Update – Odile Brunetto Chief, Aging and Disability Services, Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services**

- Challenge providing vaccines
- Montgomery County Public Health is one of many groups that has obtained vaccines from the Maryland Department of Health
- Other groups include pharmacies and hospitals
- Individuals seeking to get the vaccine need to pre-register at multiple sites
- DDA has contracted with CVS and Walgreens to provide vaccinations to residents and staff in group homes
  - This process was approved by CMS
  - DD providers had to register online with CMS in order to be considered for the vaccination
  - Four DD providers have not been able to connect with CVS or Walgreens
  - Four DD providers have not responded to inquiries and the County is not sure if they are working with CVS or Walgreens
  - Many DD providers have been able to schedule vaccinations for their residents and staff
  - Some staff are concerned about the vaccine and are open to receiving it once they see how others react to the first round of vaccines
- The County Council will receive a briefing tomorrow at 10am from a representative of the Maryland Department of Health
  - The representative will answer questions regarding the vaccination process and partnerships that the state has with pharmacies and hospitals
  - Will push for more information and clarification
  - There are not enough vaccines – only so many go to each county
  - Questions about how many vaccines Montgomery County is receiving
    - Six hospitals and pharmacies are counted in County’s allocation
  - Need information on DDA group home vaccinations so County can provide support, have oversight, accountability
    - Many staff in long term care and DD group homes are people of color
    - Targeted outreach to people of color through various County programs and Executive Committee response
    - Vaccinating staff is critical because they can both bring the virus in or can take it home and infect their families
    - Ask if state can direct CVS and Walgreens to share information with the County
    - Want to know the percentage of staff that is being vaccinated
    - Only half of staff in long term care facilities are accepting the vaccine
    - Contract is between federal government and the state
    - County does not know if providers have been scheduled
    - How will new residents and new staff receive the vaccine
  - Not all people with I/DD receive DDA funded supports, live in group homes
    - Some individuals with I/DD are unable to wear masks
    - Not appropriate to go to County clinic or retail/pharmacy to receive vaccine
    - Question – can they receive vaccine through CVS/Walgreens contract
    - Some organizations that provide day habilitation, education and employment services to people with I/DD – can these organizations receive vaccines through CVS/Walgreens contract
    - DDA clients who are self-directed are not affiliated
    - Need to identify how many self-directed individuals are in the County

- Some providers are inviting day services clients into their clinics
    - TLC is getting clients receiving day services and staff onto waitlists
    - Susan Hartung is connecting PCC with the Self-Directed Advocacy Network to advocate getting vaccines for individuals who are self-directed
    - PCC is working on an outreach plan to get vaccines for individuals who are self-directed
  - Question: Can individuals who can not go into a location due to their disability receive their vaccine through a drive-thru?
    - Flu shots were being administered outside in tents and in drive thrus
    - COVID-19 testing was also administered via drive thrus
    - Susan Hartung discussed drive-thru vaccines with PCC
    - PCC is looking at what needs to be included in a drive-thru vaccine model
    - Looking beyond the I/DD population – some cannot leave their house
    - Could vaccines be administered in the house
    - Individuals receiving the vaccine must be monitored for at least 15 minutes after being administered
    - Drive thru vaccination sites at Six Flags was set up for individuals to park for 15 minutes and the person honked their horn if they were having issues
- State pushes vaccine supply out to mass vaccination centers which are open to everyone 65 and above
  - This dilutes the vaccine supplies
  - County wants to use vaccines in the community and target individuals/priority groups
  - County has the capacity to administer the vaccines at a large site
  - Senate meeting with legislators from every county across the state were upset and raised the same issues
    - All county reps asked to have vaccines be directed by county health departments as they can better target the population
- State registration system issues
  - PrepMod, the state's system that is used to schedule vaccine appointments, doesn't filter out people who aren't eligible yet to receive the vaccine
  - Registered individuals don't know when a person will receive their vaccine
  - Not sure how many people are ahead of you on a registration list
  - Not sure what the prioritizations are
  - Registration links are being forwarded and hundreds of people are signing up and thinking they have an appointment
  - Vaccine equity issues
  - Need to work together with the state to resolve these issues
  - Concerns about losing community trust
  - Vaccination roll-out will continue to be slow until production is ramped up
- Children enrolled in MCPS special education
  - Will students coming back at the high school level be vaccinated?
  - Those students may not be affiliated with an agency
  - Vaccine is not available to anyone younger than 16
  - Odile will discuss this issue with Public Health staff
  - Suggested contacting Kevin Rounds at MCPS
- Question – when are 1C able to get vaccinated
  - Concerns of parents of 1B being vaccinated
- Everyone should pre-register with the County
  - Sign up with as many systems as possible
    - Registering multiple places increases anxiety and confusion
    - Will people unregister from multiple places after they receive the vaccine?
  - Johns Hopkins, Suburban Hospital and Kaiser are identifying eligible individuals on their lists
    - All three are receiving direct allocations from the state
- County health departments are focused on Priority 1A and vaccinating people 75 years and older
  - 70,000 County residents 75 and older
- State has had their weekly allocation increased from 75,000 to 88,000

- Question: Are schools having the same percentage of individuals not willing to be vaccinated?
  - No – it is going well
  - Staff are being vaccinated based on their priority on returning to school
  - Hospitals are providing vaccines to some private school staff
  - County has estimated there are 40 childcare centers that work with children with disabilities
  - Focusing on those staff with a limited supply of vaccines
- Vaccines for Veterans
  - Veterans age 65 and over can receive a vaccine if they are enrolled in the VA healthcare system
  - Available at the DC VA Medical Center or Martinsburg VA Medical Center
- Betsy will share any new information with Committee members via e-mail

**Update from Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) – L. Michael Bryan, Regional Deputy Director, Southern Maryland Regional Office (SMRO)**

Data as of February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021

- 852 on the waiting list
  - 14 are in crisis resolution (need services within next three months)
  - 36 are in crisis prevention (need services in the near future)
- TY2019s – 150 people total
  - 123 placed
  - 27 not placed
    - 9 declined services
    - 1 waiver denied
    - 4 still pending waiver approval
    - 10 have waivers approved but no provider
    - 3 have no waiver and no provider
- TY2020 – 167 people total
  - 79 placed last year
  - 89 not placed
    - 7 declined services
    - 1 waiver denied
    - 11 waivers are pending
    - 25 have waivers approved but no provider
    - 7 waivers approved and need a revised plan to add their providers
    - 37 have no waiver and no provider
- TY2021 – 169 people total

Michael will report to Betsy the number of people in Montgomery County who are self-directed and receiving DDA services

Providers are cautious of taking on new clients because they don't know what the future will look like. Noted that Adult Day Medical is not allowed to take on any new clients

**Coordination of Community Services (CCS) Updates**

**Rosemary DiPietro, Community Support Network, Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)**

- DHHS is not at full capacity
- Work has become more complicated
  - Coordinators are spending more time with clients
- Transformation will be a big transition with services and funding moving into LTSS Maryland
- Self-directed services will be transitioning into LTSS Maryland
  - Cost-of-living adjustments for self-directed services will be applied to an individual's budget in advance
  - Changes in how plans are prepared
  - DHHS serves at least 40 clients are self-directing services
    - Some have plans waiting to be finalized but no clear details from DDA
    - DDA asking for all self-directed plans to be revised by June 30<sup>th</sup>
- TY21s – 7 people
  - 4 have their matrix scores
  - 3 are already in services / adding day services
  - At least 3 or 4 plan to self-direct services
- TY20s
  - Still have a few not placed
- One contract employee is filling a merit position that was vacated
- Supervisor to coordinator ratio is double Total Care
  - Temporary part-time quality assurance position was extended through this fiscal year
  - Need for administrative support
  - How can this Committee help with advocating for additional funds to provide a supervisory position?
    - County Executive's operating budget will be released March 15<sup>th</sup>
    - Commission will prepare testimony for April
    - It would be appropriate if this issue were addressed by the Commission
    - Rosemary was asked to share data relating to staff to supervisor ratios, caseloads and how it compares to other agencies
      - MMARS has 10 CCSs per supervisor and is in the process of promoting someone to a supervisor position. Goal is 7 to 8 CCSs per supervisor.
        - Caseloads are 55 due to turnover.
        - In the process of reducing those caseloads – goal 35 cases per CCS
        - Three new hire groups within the last month
        - Waiting list cases are being moved to CCSs who have more time
        - Exiting CCSs indicated the current demands of case management is too stressful
        - If it continues on this trajectory there may be turnover
      - Service Coordination, Inc. has 8 CCSs per supervisor

**Service Coordination, Inc – Laurie Lyons:**

- Experiencing the same issues with self-direction
- Higher percentage of TY people who self-direct
  - May be due to individuals having more control over their schedules, staffing and activities
- Serve 386 in Montgomery County
  - 4 are in crisis resolution
  - 7 are in crisis prevention
  - 186 are in current request
  - 181 are in CCS receiving services
    - 42 self-direct
  - 8 are comprehensive assessments
- TY21/FY22 – Serving 44
- Currently have 14 CCSs in Montgomery County
- Currently fully hired but still looking to expand as clients and referrals continue to increase

### **Total Care – Gloria Odongo:**

- Serve 814 in Montgomery County
  - 665 are in services
    - 34 self-direct
    - 8 are comprehensive assessments
    - Since the last meeting 2 people transferred in and 2 people transferred out
  - 149 are on the waiting list
    - 7 are in crisis prevention
    - 3 are in crisis resolution
- TY20 – Total of 19 students
  - (8) Students placed/have been approved for the CPW waiver.
  - (2) Students – (1) PCP is pending approval (Self-Direct) and (1) PCP is in progress as the budget and service authorization requires revision.
  - (2) Students – need waivers but are currently difficult to reach.
  - (1) student – Waiver is currently pending approval.
  - (1) student – Working with DDA as the selected provider stated that the student was not on their list.
  - (2) Students have selected Rock Creek but provider is not responding and DDA is working on that.
  - (3) students- Referrals have been sent and intake is currently in process with other providers.
- TY21 - Total of 16 students
  - Planning PCP's and PCPs can now be entered for as of 02.01.2021.
  - (3) matrix scores have been submitted.
  - Coordinators have attended (3) IEP meetings.
  - Coordinators can now enter PCPs as of 02.01.2021 and once approved the waiver will be submitted.
  - (5) Students are already in the waiver (1) CPW and (4) FSW. The Coordinators will have to complete a revised PCP to update services and change the waiver type for those who are currently in the FSW.
- The Coordinators are still completing on-going wellness checks; DDA has requested that we maintain the wellness checks data, but no longer require CCS agencies to submit the data to them. However, CCS agencies are to submit this data upon request by the DDA.
- We have hired (5) additional Coordinators since the last DDAC meeting. We've seen improvement so bringing an additional people we're trying to reduce the caseloads so we haven't lost a lot of CCSs in the past couple of months so our goal was to reduce the number of caseloads that we have. Right now it's not so much turnover. When we do let someone go it's because they're not maintaining compliance and basically not doing the job. Not having a lot of people walk out. It was an issue and knock on wood that continues to not happen. not seeing much of a turnover. It's just trying to reduce the caseload at our agency. Had to do a lot with the training, checking in, having a reduced span of supervision – where the supervisors are more attentive to the coordinators cause initially they had like ten coordinators on their team. bring it down to like six or seven which is a little more manageable and they have that time to spend with the new coordinators. Hopefully that works. We'll see. We never know.
- Conducting an extensive review of our PCP process to identify strategies to improve the planning implementation and submission of the PCP.

### **MMARS - Sara O'Neil:**

- 1,458 consumers served in Montgomery County
- 1,136 are in DDA Services
  - 107 are Self-Directing
- 304 are Current Request
- 11 are Crisis Prevention
- 7 are Crisis Resolution
  - We had 1 Crisis Resolution upgrade since the last meeting
- MMARS has 47 TY'20s
  - 8 have declined services
  - 39 are still actively looking for a DDA provider

- MMARS has 55 TY'21s
  - Matrixes scores are being requested and we have begun to schedule the Initial TY PCP and Waiver Meetings
- Tough year for TYs. Providers not taking on new clients and sometimes the parents are hesitant to go through this process because they are doing virtual day programming from home, they don't have the time to support their young adults. So it's just a myriad of covid-19 that has led to our numbers being a little bit higher than they should be this time of year.
- MMARS currently has 5 Supervisors with 1 in training to become our next Supervisor
- MMARS likes to maintain a 10:1 Ratio of CCSs to 1 Supervisor
- MMARS has 1 Comprehensive Assessment Supervisor that is separate from the Supervisors listed above and 2 Comprehensive Assessment CCSs
- MMARS has 1 Quality Assurance Supervisor (again separate from the 5 above) with 10 QE staff and 1 TY Specialist
- Currently, MMARS CCSs have a caseload of 50-55 individuals that are in services OR have been selected to enter into services and now need waiver and provider enrollment
  - MMARS has a goal to reduce that caseload to 35-40 individuals per CCS
- We have separate Waiting List CCSs that have a caseload of 150 because they are only working Current Request cases that require annual monitoring
- In general, many staff members have expressed that DDA has too many "priorities" that are being requested of case managers with the multitude of changes that our occurring. At times, staff get frustrated because there are too many new things they are expected to learn, remember, and implement right away while DDA has a tendency to pull our upper management into several meetings a week and require additional trainings to be implemented to learn the myriad of new information that is being presented.

### **Announcements**

Developmental Disabilities Day is tomorrow, Tuesday February 9<sup>th</sup> at 9am

### **Respectfully Submitted,**

Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist

Betsy Luecking, Community Outreach Manager

### **Next Meeting**

Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 3:30pm to 5:00pm – via Zoom

**\*\*Please note new meeting start time\*\***

Instructions to attend will be included on the meeting agenda.