



**Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities  
Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee  
Meeting Summary – November 13th, 2017**

**Sue Hartung, Co-Chair • Larry Bram, Co-Chair**

**Present**

**Parents:** Susan Hartung (Co-Chair); Claire Funkhouser; Susan Goodman; Reda Sheinberg; John Barbee; Penny Dash; Betty Bahadori; Eleni Martin

**Organizations:** Karen Morgret – Treatment & Learning Center; Eldora Taylor – CSN; Kim Mayo, CSN; David Cross – retired MCPS; Rosemary DiPietro – CSN; Michele Kirkpatrick – CSN; Shawn Lattanzio, Local Behavioral Health Authority; Susan Smith, HOC; Daniel Hammond, MCPS; Seth Morgan, Commission on People with Disabilities; Sara O’Neill, MMARS; Penny Veerhoff – Down Syndrome Network; John Whittle – Service Coordination, Inc.; Shawn Brennan, HHS; Paulette Brooks - Maryland Community Connection; Dr. Liz Tsakirs; Jay Kenney, Aging & Disability Services; Ricki Sabia, National Down Syndrome Congress

**Staff:** Betsy Luecking

**Welcome**

Minutes from past meetings can be found online at:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/ADS/CPWD/CPWDIndex.html>, under the tab Developmental Disability Advisory Committee.

**Respite Services – Asha Clark, Director of Family & Community Services, and Julie Abate, Respite Administrator, The Arc Montgomery**

PowerPoint: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/DDAC/2017ARCRespiteProgram.pdf>

Asha noted that the Arc is celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The Arc is one of the oldest and largest non-profits in Montgomery County and is one of 700 chapters located throughout the U.S. New York just joined the Arc this past year. The Arc currently serves more seniors than any other population.

The Respite Care Services Fee Scale shown in the PowerPoint is maintained by the State of Maryland. The Arc has advocated that the state update the scale over time as at one point the scale was ten years old. The state has since updated the scale and it was last updated a year ago. It can be a challenge at times as the scale is given for the entire state of Maryland and Montgomery County has a higher income bracket.

If over night respite is requested, the Arc will recommend a respite facility that provides overnight care.

In FY2015, the Arc ran out of funding by February. They reviewed their approval process and determined that \$170,000 was spent on duplication of services. To ensure funding is available and lasts for the full fiscal year, the Arc has implemented eligibility rules that individuals who are receiving any kind of medical waiver services are limited for respite hours to reduce duplication of services. For example, an adult who is receiving 30 hours of day services and 30 hours of personal supports through waiver services would receive a total of 48 hours of respite per year. Also, individuals who are receiving Low Intensity Support Services (LISS) funding cannot use respite care funding at the same time. Contractor monitors make the respite hour determination. The Arc and Montgomery County meet each month to review funding and make sure they are serving as many people as possible.

The floor was opened to questions.

**Do families still submit for hours on the first day of the month?** Typically, yes, but the Arc has tried to streamline the process by asking families if they think they will be using the same number of hours per month with the same provider. If

yes, the request is approved for the current month and requests are pended for future months to ease the authorization process. Respite hour requests due to an emergency, such as a death in the family, will never be turned down. The Arc encourages families to use their hours and if they have not been using them by January, the Arc will contact those families. Respite hours do not roll over from year to year. The Arc works with about 20 respite facilities. There is only one facility for adults with disabilities. The Arc is currently working with a provider that will be opening a respite facility for children.

**Did everyone who requested respite get it?** Due to the new guidelines that prohibits duplication of services, every family that requested respite did receive respite hours. Arc works a lot with Adult Protective Services (APS) and Child Protective Services (CPS). Many seniors like to use respite facilities. Some parents that like to go away for a weekend may use a facility four times a year.

**Is senior respite money separate?** The senior grant is a little different as it is Federal funding. The funding is on a different fiscal year cycle and there are no income requirements.

**What is the time frame for individuals to apply?** Applications can be submitted at any time. The turnaround time for an application is 30 days, but if all supporting documentation is submitted the first time it could be one to two weeks. The website has also been updated to make the process smoother. The Arc provides a lot of community outreach and inservice training with case managers and social workers that provide resources to families so they understand the program.

**Do you provide respite care for individuals who get LISS funding?** Paulette Brooks of Maryland Community Connection noted that she is having difficulty connecting respite care providers with families receiving LISS. Julia said that she can connect Paula with those resources. The family may also be eligible for County funding based on their income, but the State funding must be used first.

**Would the Arc like to see an increase in funding?** The County makes that decision. Last year the County Council did give additional funding to the contract. Seth noted that the Commission has included respite care as a budget priority for FY2018 and was presented to the County Council in October. The Commission on Aging has also included respite care as one of their budget priorities for FY2018.

**How has the funding for seniors changed over the years?** Three years ago \$266,000 was spent on seniors. For FY2016, the funding increased to \$666,000. A senior is anyone 60 years and older. The Arc's youngest client is 3 months old and the oldest client is 108 years old. The senior grant also allows for a grandparent caring for a child with a disability to be included in their funding source. The Arc currently has five grandparents who are caring for children with disabilities. Most adults with disabilities age 18 and older, as long as there is a primary caregiver, will meet the income requirement.

**What is the Arc's budget for Respite Care?** \$1,300,000. About \$116,000 of that is designated AAA funding and is generally used within two to three months. Respite care funding does not include an additional \$70,000 for housing.

**Are you able to provide respite services for children who have behavior issues?** Julia noted that it is a struggle to get providers for those with Autism and behavior issues as typically those providers require more funding and right now the Arc only pays \$14.50 an hour. Also, members of the consortia cannot address individuals with mental health issues as those providers do not have the skill sets. Shawn Lattanzio reported that there is only one provider for children with mental health and it is located in Frederick County near the Pennsylvania line. Julia said they will be discussing the issue of respite care for children with mental health issues tomorrow. It is a challenge as many adults with mental illness do not have a caregiver and for children there is a gap for services. The agency that Julia noted earlier that will be opening will work with children with Autism and behavior problems.

The County is aware that consortia members are questioning the provider rates. The County reviewed the rates and increased the rate for Level I. The recommendation that the State provide higher rates for Level II skilled nursing care to better serve individuals with behavior issues was not approved. Some providers decided to stop providing services last year, but since the Level I rates were increased they have signed back on.

## **My Turn Program – Eldora Taylor, Program Manager, Community Support Network of Aging and Disability Services**

The My Turn Program provides short-term or one-time only financial assistance to caregivers of children with developmental disabilities and assists caregivers with accessing information, linking to other community resources and designing individual support services. The program is available for Montgomery County residents ages 3 to 13 years of age with developmental disabilities. While the program does not provide case management, staff do meet with the family at their home and are given a general assessment. The program provides education on respite resources, DDA, LISS, child care. The program will assist families with purchasing items such as beds, ramps, summer camps, and sometimes child care. Staff have helped many families get connected to ongoing resources and help them get DDA services when those families thought they could not.

The program has two designated staff. They provide outreach at schools and have made a strong effort to connect with special education teachers and have reached out to principals to let them know the program's goal of connecting directly with families. They attend monthly meetings with all the special education supervisors and have received positive feedback about their presentations. It was suggested that staff connect with the special needs PTA group. There is typically a rep at each school.

Asha noted that the Arc offers workshops and invited the My Turn staff to be a speaker at an upcoming workshop. She also stated that during respite orientation families are given information on the My Turn Program.

The following are two real situations that my My Turn Program staff assisted with. One family was a referral from the school system. When they met the family, they were living in a garage and were afraid to ask help from the County as the parents were not legal citizens, but their children were. Staff assisted them with getting Manna Food, respite care, and also purchased some clothing for them. Another family had a child with destructive behavior that had put holes in the walls of their apartment. The family was not aware they could advocate for themselves with the landlord in order to move.

Staff often work directly with Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services to avoid crisis situations.

The My Turn Program served 150 families last year and helped to connect families with approximately \$90,000 in funding from other programs.

David Cross noted that during his time with the MCPS Autism Waiver program he made referrals to the My Turn Program on a weekly basis. He suggested reaching out to families on the Autism Waiver to let them know about the program. There are 1,000 families currently on the Autism Waiver.

## **Contracts of the Community Support Network – Kim Mayo, Administrator, Community Support Network**

CSN has over 40 contracts and that does not include the DD supplement which has 33 providers at this point. There are a lot of issues currently for the DD supplement including the increase of the minimum wage to \$15.00. There is additional pressure for providers to have their wages 125% above minimum wage. County Council will be hosting a hearing on November 28<sup>th</sup> about Bill 35-17:

[https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/resources/files/lms/bill/2017/Introduction/pdf/3283\\_1461\\_Introduction\\_10312017.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/resources/files/lms/bill/2017/Introduction/pdf/3283_1461_Introduction_10312017.pdf). There is also a Council session tentatively scheduled for December 4<sup>th</sup>. The County is working to get a Medicaid match for the supplement and language within the bill regarding rates might need to be altered in order to receive a match.

CSN has base budget contracts that are ongoing and funded out of general funds and one-time community grants out of a non-departmental account that are recommended by the County Executive or the County Council. The DD supplement is out of the based budget contracts and is \$14,700,000. There are also contracts within the budget for supportive services. CSN provides operational funding for agencies such as Best Buddies, Potomac Community Resources, and Metropolitan Washington Ear. CSN has 21 community grants for a total of \$655,000: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/DDAC/CSNContractsOverviewFY18.pdf>. These grants are open to any agency and they must apply with the County Executive or County Council. Agencies can reapply every year.

CSN has one staff person for all of HHS for sign language interpreting services. The Department of General Services has the sign language interpreting contract for the whole County. There is one staff person who conducts DDA-licensed group

home site visits. She is not a licensed inspector and the visits are more of a health and wellness check where she talks to the residents and does follow-up. The County used to conduct site visits, but it was seen as a duplicative process that is also conducted by the State. The County still felt there was a need for monitoring so that is why CSN staff continue to conduct site visits.

**Update from DDA – Judith Pattik, Regional Director, Southern Maryland Regional Office**

- Of 106 TY 17, 73 have been approved to begin services. 30 of the 73 have not yet been placed. 2 declined services and 1 waiver was denied due to citizenship.
- The Community Pathways public comment period begins today and runs through 12/12/17.
- The final report of the Rate Study was released on 11/3. Town Hall meetings will take place this week. The two closest are: 11/15 at Owen Brown Interfaith Center in Columbia and 11/16 at Bowie Comfort Inn in Laurel.

**Update – Autism Waiver (TY) – Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS):** None.

**Total Care –**

**MMARS –**

**Montgomery County DHHS Update - Coordination of Community Services (CCS):** None.

**Co-Chair Update:** Susan will send out via e-mail a draft listing of parent groups of comments and suggestions.

**New Business:** Self-advocacy workgroups are scheduled to develop a response to DDA’s rate study. There are only 30 days allowed for comments. Rosemary noted that any feedback received by the DDA will be sent to CMS as they are reviewing the waiver. She encouraged everyone to read the waiver as the waiver definitions define the services received and it is important for advocates to understand and respond. It was also noted that the Federal Government is not telling states how to run these programs and it may be that whatever the state drafts will be approved.

**Announcements:** DDA is coming to next month’s meeting. Patricia Sastoque will present along with Judy Pattik.

**Next Meeting:** Monday, December 11th, 2017 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Committee will be meeting at the Health & Human Services Building, 401 Hungerford Drive, 1st Floor 1A Conference Room, Rockville, MD 20850

**Respectfully Submitted,**

Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist

Betsy Luecking, Community Outreach Manager