



## Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission February 2024 Special Meeting Minutes

### **February Special Meeting**

**Date:** Tuesday February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Time:** 6:30pm

Quorum was present to vote on a letter to the Secretary of Health regarding concerns related to the Medicaid redetermination process. The IDDC unanimously voted for the letter to be sent to the appropriate DDA/State officials (Dr. Herrera Scott, Marlana R. Hutchinson, Ryan Moran). The meeting was adjourned after the vote.

### **Full Commission Meeting**

**Date:** Thursday February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Time:** 4:25pm-7pm

**Location:** \*\*Zoom\*\*

**Opening Remarks:** Chair Michael Greenberg initiated the opening remarks, discussed that the meeting will be recorded for reasonable accommodation purposes. County Liaison Ahmna Khan confirmed that there was a quorum present during the meeting. Chair Michael Greenberg called the meeting order and briefly went over the main agenda points.

### **Meeting Content:**

- Chair Michael Greenberg introduced a new Commissioner, Smil Soria, who has been selected to be the 19<sup>th</sup> commissioner member of IDDC to represent as a family/guardian member of an individual with IDD.
- Secretary Jake Didinsky made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for the special meeting in January followed by Commissioner Lori Mitchell Keller who seconded the motion. The meeting minutes was unanimously approved by the commission.
- County Liaison Ahmna Khan provided a brief update regarding the most updated membership list and went over subcommittee expectations regarding agendas to be submitted.
- CPWD Liaison and Vice Chair, John Whittle did not have any major updates but provided information regarding the IDDC's follow up to Brookside Gardens.
- Chair Michael Greenberg introduced Montgomery County Coordination of Community Services Program Manager Rosemary DiPietro to speak on Medicaid, its' relationship to DDA and the current concerns/challenges. Some of the challenges/concerns that were highlighted included Medicaid interfering with people's ability to get healthcare and DDA funded services.
- Rosemary DiPietro gave a background for clarifying. She discussed that people who receive direct services from DDA are typically enrolled in one of three federal home and community-based Medicaid

waiver programs. Explained that the “waiver” is waiving services receiving in an institution environment and rather receiving services in a community. Waiver services are delivered by license community providers and authorized individuals. The state receives matching dollars from the federal government for the waiver services that they have approved through this home and community-based service. The waivers that DDA administers is the Community Pathways/ Community Supports Waiver and Family Supports Waiver. In order to be enrolled in a waiver, there are several requirements. She described that people receiving DDA services obtaining and maintaining Medicaid eligibility has historically been straight-forward. Current issues with Medicaid are related to the pandemic and how the federal government and the state addressed people who were eligible during the pandemic. The federal government and the state were not “kicking out” anyone out of Medicaid during this time. There is now a redetermination process that can affect services for individuals. One of the concerns include DDA terminating services for individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria for Medicaid.

- Chair Michael Greenberg asked for the commissioners to put together their questions regarding the Medicaid issue for information gathering services. Chair Michael Greenberg allotted time for commissioners to ask questions to County personnel Rosemary DiPietro regarding the subject matter.
- Commissioner David Ervin made a statement related to the importance of the issue at hand and has suggested for the commission to take formal action to either alert the state to its’ need to get this resolved in the administrative level or engage the state or the county in some solutions-oriented work in the immediate term.
- Chair Michael Greenberg introduced guest speaker Mary Joy Malumba who is a community outreach fellow with Brookside Gardens. Mary Joy Malumba initially reached out to Chair Michael Greenberg regarding wanting input from the IDDC as they redesign/renovate Brookside Gardens for accessibility.
- Community outreach fellow Mary Joy Malumba shared a PowerPoint presentation. She discussed that the goal was to make Brookside Gardens as inclusive and accessible as possible for those with disabilities. Mary Joy Malumba went over information regarding Brookside Gardens. She discussed specific topics that are in need of feedback including Physical Access and Barriers, Access to Information, and Suggest Accommodations & Programs.
- Community outreach fellow Mary Joy Malumba allotted time for commissioners to state any feedback or questions. Multiple commissioners discussed wheelchair accessibility and emphasized importance in sensory inclusivity.
- Chair Michael Greenberg suggested for Commissioners to put something formal together for Brookside Gardens including feedback and suggestions.
- Chair Michael Greenberg discussed ADHOC subcommittees. It was highlighted that the priorities would be drawn from adhoc subcommittees. ADHOC subcommittee updates were provided.
  - 1.) Promoting Quality and Services ADHOC Subcommittee: Commissioner Steve Riley presented a document titled “Promoting Quality IDD services in Montgomery County, understanding the landscape” to the commission that was provided in the initial read-ahead documents to commissioners. Commissioner Steve Riley discussed that the purpose of the document is to get a snapshot of programs, services, initiatives, and resources to serve individuals in the IDD across the lifespan. It is an inventory of providers that are funded through DDA that provide services in the county. It is also an inventory of organizations that provide services.

*Steve Riley requested that the IDD vote to approve on the document. Ken Hartman from the County Executive’s office discussed that there would be no formal vote needed because this solely a request*

*for information. Chair Michael Greenberg discussed moving forward with the document without the need for a formal vote.*

*Secretary Jake Didinsky made a motion for the “Promoting Quality IDD services in Montgomery County, understanding the landscape” document to be included in the minutes. Commissioner Rick Callahan seconded the motion. The commission was all in favor.*

- 2.) Hospitalization/IDD Dual Diagnosis ADHOC Subcommittee: Commissioner Eric Salzano discussed that the workgroup met with a strategy to understand policies and procedures of hospitals in the county including training programs they have in place. Discussed that the subcommittee hopes to speak with hospital administrators in county hospitals to understand some of the issues/challenges/barriers with hospitalization and Dual Diagnosis.
- 3.) Special Education ADHOC Subcommittee: Commissioner Natori Green discussed having two meetings thus far in January and February. Discussed challenges related to contacting someone in the special education department of MCPS. Commissioner Carmen suggested a contact from the special education department.
- 4.) Workforce ADHOC Subcommittee: Commissioner David Ervin discussed looking at local, regional and national data sets looking at vacancy and turn-over rates. Discussed that the idea is to understand workforce developments that are prevalent and how they are differentiated in Montgomery County. Focusing on career ladders and DSP workforce.
- 5.) DD Legislative Action and Policy ADHOC Subcommittee: Chair Michael Greenberg discussed importance to weigh in and comment on policies that are being released by the DDA as they come out for public input. Also the importance with looking at state and county bills and legislative items. Vice Chair John Whittle discussed looking at the bill tracker to look at bills that may be impacting individuals with IDD.

**My Turn Project:** Chair Michael Greenberg presented the “My Turn” project which consists of changing of pictures on the IDDC website to use real photos of individuals with IDD and stories with consent. Chair Michael Greenberg made a motion for this to project to move forward. Commissioner David Ervin second the motion. The IDDC unanimously voted for the project to move forward.

**Annual Report:** Chair Michael Greenberg introduced the Annual report and discussed its’ context. Discussed that typically the priorities come from the workgroups.

**Subcommittees Voted In:** Chair Michael Greenberg brought up three ADHOC subcommittee groups that were suggested by commissioners. Two out of three subcommittees were voted through (not unanimously).

- A.) Community Engagement ADHOC Subcommittee: Commissioner Jake Didinsky Volunteered to facilitate this group.
- B.) Employment ADHOC Subcommittee: Commissioner Jake Didinsky volunteered to facilitate this group in the interim.
- C.) Housing: There were no commissioners that volunteered to facilitate this group.

**Open Forum:** Commissioners engaged in discussion mostly about subcommittee formation. There were no members of the public who participated in open forum.

**Meeting Adjournment:** Meeting summary was discussed followed by an adjournment.

### **Meeting Minute Key Content from Chat**

There were 0 External Interruptions or compromises of meeting integrity. All chat was deemed to be appropriate in content. There was no significant use of the chat feature for troubleshooting technical issues (i.e., poor audio, unmuted microphones). There was no use of chat for discussion of substantive issues. Overall almost no use of Chat during the meeting.

**Meeting Accessibility Notice:** Sign language interpreter services and other auxiliary aids or services will be provided upon request with as much advance notice as possible, preferably at least three (3) full business days before the meeting/event. To request any other reasonable accommodation or to advise us of any dietary considerations (for in-person meetings), please send a request to [Ahmna.Khan@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Ahmna.Khan@montgomerycountymd.gov). Taking these steps will help us have sufficient time to best meet your needs.

### **SPECIAL MEETING DOCUMENTS:**

February 27, 2024

Laura Herrera Scott, MD  
Secretary of Health

Office

of

Secretary

Herbert R. O'Connor State Office Building  
201 West Preston Street, Baltimore MD 21201

Dear Dr. Laura Herrera Scott

I am writing on behalf of the Montgomery County **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission** to highlight systemic issues we have identified in the Maryland Department of Health's Eligibility Redetermination Process and offer recommendations to address them. These issues require immediate action as they are significantly impacting individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in Montgomery County and across Maryland, particularly their access to uninterrupted essential services including but not limited to routine and emergency medical care, including prescription drugs, long term services and supports, and transportation.

We believe that collaborative efforts between the Intellectual Developmental Disabilities Commission, the Medicaid Eligibility Determination Division, the Developmental Disabilities Administration, and the Coordinators of Community Services are essential to expedite immediate actions to resolve these issues and improve outcomes for Marylanders with disabilities. Outlined below are recommended immediate next steps that we believe will help mitigate the risks to Home and Community Based Services and medical assistance eligibility challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in accessing necessary services:

1. Provide DDA-certified Provider Agencies with a List of Redetermination Dates:
  - Furnish agencies with a comprehensive list of redetermination dates for all individuals supported. Medicaid eligibility dates showing in LTSS*Maryland* are not consistently accurate and cannot be relied

upon by provider agencies willing to facilitate the redetermination process. This listing of current and verified redetermination dates will facilitate accurate information and enable providers to collaborate with Coordinators of Community Services (CCS) agencies on the submission of redetermination packets, thereby reducing waiver ineligibility and the risk of individuals losing healthcare and long-term services and supports.

2. Pause the Redetermination Process:
  - Temporarily pause the redetermination process until such time as current challenges to the system are resolved. This will ensure that all individuals remain eligible for healthcare and long-term services and supports until a comprehensive resolution is determined.
3. Extend Appeals Process Timeline:
  - Extend the appeals process timeline from 10 days to 60 days to accommodate people with IDD, their provider agencies and family members who may not receive timely notification of redeterminations. This extension will enable them to submit appeals within a reasonable timeframe, and, critically, will allow the Medicaid Eligibility Determination Division to catch up processing a growing number of redetermination submissions, thereby increasing the likelihood of maintaining the individual's waiver eligibility without service interruption.
4. Continue Retroactive Payment Position:
  - Maintain the retroactive payment position to demonstrate a commitment to providers by ensuring reimbursement for services rendered. This will encourage providers to continue delivering services and support to individuals, ensuring uninterrupted access to necessary resources.

In addition to these immediate actions, we propose the following future action steps:

1. Ensure Accuracy of LTSS*Maryland* Information:
  - Verify the accuracy of redetermination information in LTSS*Maryland* to prevent inaccuracies and discrepancies.
  - Provide agencies with the ability to access the redetermination applications in LTSS*Maryland*. This enhancement will allow providers to collaborate with CCS agencies in accurately submitting documentation and/or facilitate the retrieval of information from family members or caregivers.
2. Establish a Process for Updating Authorized Representatives:
  - Implement a process within CCS agencies to update the authorized representative when there are changes in staff within CCS agencies.
3. Build Capacity Within EDD for Timely Processing:
  - Enhance capacity within MDH's Eligibility Determination Department to ensure timely processing of redetermination packets.

In the immediate term, we believe these steps are essential to assuring no interruption or losses of services for Marylanders with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. We further believe that by implementing these proposed next steps and fostering collaboration between agencies and stakeholders, we can address the systemic issues in the Eligibility Redetermination Process and improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities in Maryland.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response and to working together towards positive change.

**FEBRUARY FULL COMMISSION MEETING DOCUMENTS:**

**Promoting Access to Quality I/DD Services for Montgomery County residents: Understanding  
the Current Landscape  
Subcommittee approved Draft 1/10/2024**

This project consists of seven main components:

1. An inventory of I/DD service provider organizations funded through the Maryland DDA that offer services to County residents.
2. A survey of those provider organizations to determine:
  - (a) what types of services each offers;
  - (b) if each is serving the maximum number of individuals with I/DD for which it has capacity;
  - (c) if not, what are the challenges/impediments faced by each provider organization preventing it from reaching capacity;
  - (d) the DSP staffing/vacancy situation at each;
  - (e) the schedule of compensation and benefits paid by each to the DSPs they employ;
  - (f) if each provider is a member of the Maryland Direct Service Professional (DSP) Training Consortium, and does each utilize the DSP training program offered by the Consortium; and
  - (g) if each provider has a waitlist for its services and if so, how many individuals are on the waitlist; the average length of time that an individual remains on the waitlist; the projection for when the waitlist would be eliminated;
  - (h) whether **bilingual staff** are providing service during any of the following:
    - i. the admissions process (if yes, which language or languages)
    - ii. program management (if yes, which language or languages)

- iii. direct services (if yes, which language or languages).
3. An inventory of organizations (including County DHHS) that offer Coordination of Community Services (CCS) to County residents, including:
- (a) identification of all entities offering CCS services;
  - (b) the for-profit or non-profit status of each;
  - (c) the number of CCS counselors each employs;
    - i. the number of **bilingual CCS's** providing coordination services in a language other than English (and a list of which language or languages are served by bilingual CCS's);
    - ii. if the agency also has staff interpreters, please list them separately.
  - (d) the case load for each CCS at each organization;
  - (e) the challenges/impediments that each faces to delivering optimal service to County residents with I/DD; and
  - (f) the amount and sources of funding that each receives to provide CCS services to County residents.
4. An inventory of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) programs and resources that support pre-schoolers (e.g., infants and toddlers) and MCPS students with I/DD, including:
- (a) the current FY MCPS budget for all special education activities, with same data for past 5 years to indicate trends;
  - (b) the number of MCPS students with I/DD;
  - (c) a description of MCPS programs that identify children with I/DD and facilitate their intake into special education programs;
  - (d) a description of MCPS programs that facilitate special education students' transitions from school-based services to adult I/DD services;
  - (e) the number of students who will transition at the end of the current school year, and estimates of the numbers of students expected to transition at the end of the next four school years.
5. An inventory of Montgomery County Government programs and services that support/serve County residents who have I/DD offered by County Government Departments and instrumentalities (e.g. Health & Human Services, Recreation, Housing Opportunities Commission, Housing & Community Affairs, Libraries), including descriptions, contact information and current FY budgets.

6. An inventory of programs and organizations that connect young people who have I/DD with I/DD service provider organizations and self-direction supports, to facilitate the young peoples' transitions from school-based services to adult I/DD services.
7. An inventory of Montgomery County nonprofit organizations that serve individuals with I/DD through programs and services (e.g., Potomac Community Resources, Inc.; Upcounty Community Resources, Inc.; Rosaria Communities, Inc.; Sunflower Bakery; Special Olympics; Down Syndrome Network of Montgomery County).

The data that this project would yield would provide an understanding of the current I/DD service landscape in Montgomery County and the gaps in services that exist, and the focus of work that could improve the quantity and quality of I/DD services offered, and access to such services for County residents who have I/DD.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS & EXPLORATION

Proposed by Michael D. Greenberg, MD

- IDD This Is My Story -

Dear Commissioners:

I wanted to put out for consideration the following suggestion for discussion and input. Every Montgomery County Commission has its own county website. While there are commonalities among all there is also latitude for each Commission to adopt its website to best meet the needs of those whom it advocates for.

A look at the existing IDD Commission website shows that it clearly uses public, open-source stock photos. These photos are used on a number of other websites, are not unique or particularly meaningful and importantly do not represent the core demographics or tone of the IDD Community. A quick look at what is portrayed shows the overwhelming majority of individuals to be children and every person shown has a broad smile. This is not the reality of the IDD community where adults, seniors, are frequently those with greatest unmet need. Additionally while there are frequent smiles and happiness there are also a lot of challenges and pain.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/ADS/IDD/IDDCIndex.html> )

I would like to propose we rework the website as a whole and start with modifying the pictures used to promote a more accurate reflection of our IDD Community, to engage the public in a meaningful way and to share the story of what it means to have IDD.



I would propose we rotate pictures on a quarterly basis. We engage families and those with IDD who are interested to submit real pictures along with a short narrative of their choosing describing the challenges, successes and failures of being someone with or someone supporting those with IDD. Below is a crude mockup of what a revised set of pictures might look like. I would emphasize that all pictures would be voluntarily submitted by those members of the public who choose to and with full permission to publish. There would be a narrative provided by each participant that would be featured on the website.



John

Thomas

Sara

Jamil

This would be a first step in improving and increasing the meaningfulness of our website. I would appreciate everyone's input on this general idea and we will discuss it at the upcoming Commission Meeting.

Sincerely,

Michael

## Brookside Gardens Accessibility

# Agenda

## 01 Context

Information on Brookside Gardens

## 02 Objectives

Specific Topics In Need for Feedback

## 03 Q&A and

## Survey

Questions, Comments, & Contact Information

Brookside Gardens



A 50-acre Public Display Garden

- Located inside Wheaton Regional Park in Montgomery County, Maryland



***Japanese Tea House - One of Brookside***

*Gardens' most popular areas*

- Brookside Gardens have distinct areas such as the Japanese Style Garden.
- Hosts Garden of Lights yearly and other educational and recreational programming

# Objectives



## Physical Access & Barriers

Physical barriers which discourage/prevent a visit to Brookside Gardens



## Access to Information

Is information on Brookside Gardens easy to access?



## Suggested Accommodations & Programs

Any programming or accommodations you want Brookside Gardens provided?

**Q&A - Any Questions or Comments?**

For any further updates, comments, or additional questions, please contact:

**Mary Joy Mulumba**

[MaryJoy.Mulumba@montgomeryparks.org](mailto:MaryJoy.Mulumba@montgomeryparks.org) 301.962.1447

<b>VOTING MEMBERS</b>  <b>C = Conference Call / C* = Alternate Attended / P = Present / A = Absence</b>  <b>W = Waived Absences by County Executive / R = Waiver Requested</b>		October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	September	October	Absences
1.	Patrick Callahan	P	P	P	W	P							
2.	Jillian Copeland	P	P	P	W	P							
3.	Tracy Craig	A	P	P	W	P							
4.	Jake Didinsky	P	P	P	W	P							
5.	Jamie Doyle	P	P	P	W	P							
6.	David Ervin	P	A	P	W	P							
7.	Natori Green	P	P	P	W	P							
8.	Michael Greenberg	P	P	P	W	P							
9.	Lori Mitchell-Keller	A	P	P	W	P							
10.	Lisa Lorraine	P	P	P	W	P							
11.	Jenn Lynn	P	P	P	W	P							
12.	Stephen Riley	P	P	P	W	P							
13.	Eric Salzano	P	P	P	W	P							
14.	Carmen Smith	P	P	P	W	P							
15.	Yvonne Vanlowe	P	P	P	W	P							
16.)	Najla Wortham	P	P	A	W	P							
17.)	John Whittle	P	P	P	W	P							
18.)	Carmen Zahra	P	P	P	W	P							
19.)	Smil Soria	W	W	W	W	P							
<b>Attendance Policy:</b> A Voting Member may miss up to 3 meetings within a one year rolling period. Voting Members who miss more than 3 meetings in that period or who miss 3 consecutive meetings will be automatically removed. Waivers may be requested for absences caused by extenuating circumstances.													

Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members												
1. Onesta Duke- Maryland Department of Health.	P	P	P	W	P							
2. Justin Hack- WorkSource Montgomery	P	P	P	W	A							
3. Dorne Hill- Department of Health and Human Services	P	P	P	W	P							
4. Karla Nabors- Montgomery College	P	P	P	W	P							
5. Sharon Norcio- Montgomery County Recreation	P	P	P	W	P							
6. Margie Parrott- Montgomery County Public Schools	W	P	P	W	P							